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Floris and Blancheflour

A Middle-English Romance

Edited from the

Trentham and Auchinleck MSS.

by

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Oxford

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INTRODUCTION

THE romance of *Floris and Blancheflour* enjoyed great popularity throughout Europe in the Middle Ages: from the French versions it was translated into most of the languages of western Europe. There were two distinct versions of the story, on one or other of which all the European forms of the romance are based. The first preserves the story in the more original form, and was intended for the higher and more cultured classes; the second was an adaptation made to suit the taste of less cultured audiences. In the latter the action was quickened by abridging many of the descriptive passages, and by adding further adventurous episodes; for the middle and lower classes desired rapid action and exciting adventure, as well as a powerful love theme. Two extant French poems represent these two versions of the story, and have been called by Du Méril the 'aristocratic' and 'popular' versions respectively. The aristocratic version is the earliest known form of the story; it was composed before c. 1170 (probably about a decade earlier) when it was translated into a Low Rhenish version. Only fragments of this translation have survived. There is also a reference to the story in the poems (in Provençal) of Countess Beatrix de Die, addressed to Count Raimbout d'Orange, who died in 1173.

The most important of the romances based on the earlier (aristocratic) French version are:

(1) The Low Rhenish poem *Floyris and Blaunchiflur*, of c. 1170; ed. Steinmeyer, *Zeitschrift für Deutsches Altertum*, xxi. 307.

(2) The Middle High German poem *Flore und Blanscheflur*, composed by Konrad Fleck about the middle of the thirteenth century; ed. E. Sommer, Leipzig, 1846.

(3) The English poem, composed not long before the middle of the thirteenth century.

(4) The Scandinavian versions, based on a Norwegian prose translation of the thirteenth century, of which only fragments survive. There is, however, a complete Icelandic saga of the fourteenth century, *Flóres Saga ok Blankiflúr*, ed. Koelbing, 1896, and a Swedish poem of c. 1311, ed. Klemming, Stockholm, 1844.

(5) The Middle Dutch romance of *Floris ende Blancefloer*, composed by Diederik van Assenede in the second half of the thirteenth century; ed. Moltzer, Groningen, 1879.

Based on the popular French version are:

(1) Boccaccio's *Filocolo*, a very free adaptation of the story, and of little merit.

(2) Another Italian version belonging to the first quarter of the fourteenth century, *Cantare di Fiorio e Biancifore*; based on it is a fourteenth-century Greek version.

(3) A prose romance in Spanish, *Flores y Blancaflor*, printed at Alcalá in 1512.

We are here concerned only with the aristocratic version, on which the English poem is based.

The opening scene presents Felix, the pagan ruler of Almeria in Spain, engaged in a predatory raid in Galicia. He there meets with a band of pilgrims, who all surrender without resistance, except a French nobleman of their party, who is killed while defending his daughter, a young widow. This lady is taken captive to Almeria, but is treated with all the respect

due to her rank, and given into the care of the queen, where her noble and courteous bearing soon win for her the love and esteem of the whole court. On Palm Sunday she gives birth to a daughter and the queen to a son. This day being the festival of flowers, Felix commands the girl to be called *Blancheflour*, and the boy *Florice*. They are brought up and educated together as equals, and this intimacy fosters an ever-increasing love between them. They are never apart, either at home or at school, until Felix becomes uneasy at his son's love for one who is merely a slave. He decides to kill *Blancheflour*, hoping that *Florice* will in time forget her, and later marry in accordance with his rank. The queen, wishing to save the maiden's life, suggests that, if *Florice* is sent alone to visit his uncle, daily contact with other maidens will quickly cure his infatuation. The separation is contrived by causing both the tutor and *Blancheflour*'s mother to feign illness, the former in order that *Florice* should think he is sent away to continue his studies, the latter as an excuse for keeping *Blancheflour* at home. When *Florice* has gone the queen advises that *Blancheflour* should be sold to some Babylonian slave-merchants, and that an empty tomb should be engraved with her name. By this means the queen hopes to avoid the dishonour which would accrue from the murder of *Blancheflour*, and at the same time to wean her son from his unfortunate love.

Florice grieves so much at the separation from his old playmate that he has to be sent home. He is shown the fictitious tomb, but, instead of fulfilling his mother's hopes, he secretly resolves to kill himself. To drive away his grief every possible kind of diversion is employed by his parents, but without avail. Even the uncanny tricks of a wizard conjuror, who can cut off and restore his own head at will, breathe flames,

and illuminate the whole castle merely by whistling, fail to rouse Florice from his lethargy. When all the household is asleep he enters the cage of his father's captive lions, who, however, display admirable restraint in refusing to harm a royal prince. Florice is therefore driven to decide upon the surer plan of stabbing himself, but is seen by his mother, who intervenes, and prevents any future attempt at suicide by warning him of the fate of self-murderers and that he would thus deprive himself of all hopes of seeing Blancheffleur again, as she naturally would be in heaven. His grief, however, causes his parents so much alarm that he is told the truth.

Florice determines to seek his love, and begins his journey disguised as a merchant. He is always fortunate enough to rest at inns which the slave-merchants have also visited. His resemblance to Blancheffleur always incites his hosts to mention the beautiful captive who has been carried off to Babylon, destined for the Emir's harem. His quest is therefore perfectly straightforward until he reaches Babylon, and there, with the help of the Emir's porter, whom he has heavily bribed, he is carried into the harem in a basket of flowers. Thus the lovers meet again, but their happiness is short-lived, owing to the carelessness of Blancheffleur, who neglects her morning duties to the Emir, and, being sent for, is discovered in the arms of her lover. The Emir is with difficulty restrained from killing the lovers, and consents to hold a formal trial. Their guilt is so evident that they are quickly condemned to death by the assembled barons, but are saved by the suggestion of a duke that it would be more profitable for the Emir to know how access was possible to his harem than to kill the children, and perpetually to incur the same risk. Florice recounts the story of their lives, and is not only pardoned, but even married

to Blancheflour, though the Emir had designed her for his own wife. Hearing, soon afterwards, of his father's death, Florice returns to Spain, is crowned king, and accepts Christianity, which he proceeds to force upon all his subjects. He marries his mother-in-law to a powerful duke and enjoys a long and prosperous reign.

Very like this is another French romance, *Aucassin and Nicolette*,¹ which is deservedly better known. The striking similarity in theme led some scholars to think that it is merely another version of the same original story. But though there is a general likeness in their stories, the incidents differ so widely that it is clear that, if the romances are related, their common ancestor existed long before the stories were told in French. Aucassin is a young Christian prince who loves a captive 'Paynim' maiden, Nicolette. Their love is forbidden by Aucassin's father, and they are imprisoned. They escape, and in the course of his adventures Aucassin is imprisoned by the Saracens. Nicolette seeks for him in disguise, and when she finds him and is assured of his continued love, she obtains his liberty and becomes his wife. Both romances may be treatments of the same Eastern story, but their relation, if any, is distant.

To the medieval mind the theme of both romances would appear neither fantastic nor absurd. In the days of feudalism, when marriage was largely a business contract by which estates were linked together, this type of story would appeal strongly to sons and daughters, who, loving where they were forbidden to marry, could obtain their desires only at the risk of great personal dangers.²

¹ Edited by F. W. Bourdillon, Manchester University Press. Unfortunately, no early English version is extant.

² The converse—the love of a humble knight for a high-born maid—was a favourite topic of romance; cf. *King Horn*, *Amis and Amiloun*, *The Squire of Low Degree*.

The origin of our story has, in the past, been ascribed to various sources, some of the theories being based upon little or no evidence. One early suggestion was that its basis was Germanic mythology, the carrying off of a maiden by elves. It was noted, however, by Du Méril that the motif and customs are very similar to those of Byzantine romances. Later, researches into Arabic literature revealed strong resemblances to the typical Arab love-tales, and suggested an Eastern source. When we consider how much of the Oriental atmosphere would be lost in the re-telling of an Eastern story by a native of France, the stronghold of Feudalism and Christianity, the presence, in our romance, of so many customs typical of Eastern tales speaks strongly in favour of this theory. It matters little whether it conforms to Eastern life; that it conforms to life as portrayed in Eastern romance may be abundantly illustrated from the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*.

The deception of Florice by means of a fictitious tomb is closely paralleled in the story of *Ganem, Son to Abou Ayoub*, in which the same stratagem is employed by the jealous queen to win the Caliph from his passion for a favourite slave. Travelling in disguise is not only a common theme of romance, but must have been widely practised in real life. In western Europe, following the Crusades, the favourite disguise was that of a pilgrim or palmer.¹ In the East princes wishing to travel incognito generally dressed as merchants. Both types of disguise were adopted as least likely to excite comment amongst strangers. Haroun al Raschid invariably travelled as a merchant when he desired to make an inspection of his state unobserved. Strangely enough, in the romances based upon the popular version of our story, Florice, scorning disguise

¹ Cf. *King Horn*, *Beves of Hamtoun*, and Scott's *Ivanhoe*.

as unknightly, travelled *en prince*. This obstinate pride is by no means inconsistent with the character of the medieval knight, although the average Oriental would consider that the gain to be had from a disguise would amply compensate for his temporary degradation in status. In the story of *Prince Ahmed and the Fairy Pari Banou* the Sultan expressly warns his three sons against travelling as princes, telling them that they will gain more experience if disguised. Not only do they travel as merchants, but also adopt the practice followed by Florice, of staying at inns,¹ some of which appear to have been expressly appointed for the reception of strangers. Clandestine entry into a nobleman's harem must have been a favourite theme in Eastern love-tales, and a close parallel to that of Florice is provided by the story of *The Sultan of Casgar's Purveyor*; a similar method of concealment, although for a very different purpose, was used by the thieves in *Ali Baba*.

One Arab story, related by Huet,² parallels our story very closely in several particulars. A merchant of Coufa buys a female slave, who has a daughter of the same age as his own son. The two children are brought up together, fall in love, and are finally betrothed. The slave-maiden's beauty, however, has attracted the attention of the Governor, who carries her off and presents her to the Caliph. The merchant's son seeks until he finds where she has been taken, enters the harem disguised as a girl, but has his sex discovered by the Caliph's sister.³ The chief objection urged against an Eastern origin—the respect paid by the Emir to the sanctity of marriage—may be

¹ *A. N. E.*, khans or caravanseraï.

² See Bibliography.

³ She confirms her suspicions in the same way as does the Emir of our romance.

consistent with Eastern life, but certainly not with Eastern romance. Many of the stories of the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments* clearly indicate that the queen usually held a much more exalted position than her husband's concubines. Conjugal love and fidelity are frequently stressed, and in the story of *Beder, Prince of Persia*, affection for his wife is shown by putting away all his concubines.

There were two common channels through which Eastern tales could be freely introduced into western Europe: orally by crusaders and pilgrims, and either orally or in written form through the Byzantines. Not only pilgrims, but even crusaders frequently lived on friendly terms with the Saracens, and many towns in Palestine were for generations governed by crusading princes, so that there was ample opportunity for extensive interchange of ideas. Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire, formed—until 1453—the Eastern boundary between the Christian and Mohammedan worlds. The Greeks of the Byzantine Empire were thus in constant touch and usually on friendly terms with the races both of western Europe and of Asia Minor. From the latter they received many stories which eventually passed into western Europe. The usual channel was through a Latin translation of a Greek romance which either retold or was based upon an Eastern tale. From Latin, translations or adaptations were made by French writers, more commonly first into Provençal and later into northern French and other European languages. Considering the channels through which our story is likely to have reached the author of the earliest French romance, we are surprised to find how much of the oriental atmosphere still remains, and even in the English adaptation this atmosphere is fairly well preserved.

Some time in the thirteenth century—probably not long before the middle of the century—the story was adapted from French into English, and of this poem four MSS. remain in various stages of incompleteness :

(1) Cambridge MS.¹ Gg. 4. 27. 2 (referred to in this edition as *C*), written in the latter half of the thirteenth century ; the first line corresponds to line 389 of the text of this edition.

(2) British Museum MS.¹ Cotton Vitellius D. iii (hereafter called *V*), of about the same date as *C*. It was almost completely destroyed by fire in 1731 ; only about 200 lines are left that can be used for textual purposes.

(3) Auchinleck MS.¹ (hereafter called *A*), preserved in the Advocates Library, Edinburgh. It was written in the second quarter of the fourteenth century.

(4) Trentham MS.¹ (hereafter called *T*), now Egerton MS. 2862 in the British Museum, written in the first half of the fifteenth century. It is of especial value as preserving 366 lines of the beginning of our text which the other MSS. lack.

These MSS. are copies of a lost original. Their texts may have been transmitted in one of two ways : either by means of scribal copies, or by writing down versions recited by minstrels who memorized the original. Also, just as a MS. may be a copy of a copy, so it may be one minstrel's version memorized from the recital of another minstrel, the number of stages in each case being indefinite. The wide discrepancies between the four MSS. of the romance indicate that the latter process is the more probable, and the probability is strengthened when we consider that romances must have been more frequently circulated by minstrels than by scribes.

¹ See Bibliography for editions.

An allusion in the romance *Emare* appears to indicate that the love of Florice and Blanche flour had become famous and was regarded—like that of Tristram and Isolde—as a transcendent and eternal example for lovers. Mention is there made of a piece of tapestry, on the corners of which are embroidered scenes from romance, each corner representing a pair of lovers. In the first, second, and fourth corners respectively are portrayed *Idoyne and Amadas*, *Tristram and Isolde*, and *The Son of the Sultan and Daughter of the Emir of Babylon*; and

*In the thrydde korner, with gret honour
Was Florys and dam Blawnech flour . . .
Purtrayed they were with trewe-love flower.*¹

The story of Florice and Blanche flour was also incorporated into the romance of Huon de Bordeaux,² with only such variations as may be attributed partly to faulty memorizing and partly to the necessity of making it consistent with the remainder of the romance. Blanche flour's name is replaced by that of Clarissa, who becomes Clariet, and is represented as a daughter of Huon. Some of the variations strongly resemble incidents in *Aucassin and Nicolette*, and perhaps point to a confusion or even a deliberate amalgamation of the two stories.

This tale of faithful love, although in its English version of less literary merit than some romances, still deserves to be widely read. It is the romance which best shows the attitude of our medieval forefathers towards the East, the home of mystery and magic, only beginning to be dimly known from the stories of pilgrims and crusaders. Its interest is also greatly increased by the refreshing contrast which it offers to

¹ Joseph Ritson, *Ancient English Metrical Romances*, vol. ii, p. 209.

² See E. E. T. S., Extra Series, Nos. 40, 41, 43, 50.

the stories of knight-errantry which abound in the cycles of Arthur and of Charlemagne. It is true that, in the romances of Charlemagne and of Alexander, we are frequently introduced to Eastern scenes, but not so as to become intimate with them. These scenes as a rule differ in no essentials from those of western Europe, being merely towns, castles, or bridges that obstruct the path of a conquering knight. The characters are encountered only behind mail-coats and at the end of a lance. In our story we are introduced into the home life of the East, and we have, in addition, the rare example of a Saracen setting for a story designed for Christian audiences. Lastly, it is a story whose interest arises not from martial deeds, or from adventurous crusades, undertaken to defend Holy Church or to win the love of fair ladies, but a simple love-idyll, the eternal story of King Cophetua and the beggar-maid. In spite of the rigid caste system of a feudal age, in spite of the ruthless feud between Christian and Saracen, love breaks down all opposition. From the beginning to the end of time, the eternal theme of literature has been and will be the supremacy of love.

The story—considered apart from its treatment in any individual version—is of great beauty, and well worthy of the praise lavished upon it by Du Ménil.¹

‘C’est là certainement une touchante histoire. Ces deux enfants dont l’amour s’était épanoui naturellement, sans le savoir, comme une rose sur un rosier; qui, séparés par la naissance, la fortune, l’autorité d’un père et d’un roi, l’éloignement, le désespoir, n’étaient réunis que par les instincts de leur cœur, et se retrouvaient pour ne plus se quitter, uniquement parce qu’ils s’étaient aimés et qu’ils avaient persévéré dans leur amour, devaient singulièrement réussir dans un temps, où l’amour semblait, sinon la principale affaire, au moins le plus grand bonheur de la vie. C’était un encouragement pour les uns, une

¹ In the Introduction to his edition of the French poems, p. xi.

consolation pour les autres, un enseignement pratique et une espérance pour tous.'

The pathos of the seemingly hopeless quest of a frail boy, whose only strength is his unceasing love and steadfast loyalty, is more strongly accentuated by contrast with the typical knight of romance, whose valour and strength so often sufficed to overcome whole armies.¹ The Romantic School of the Middle Ages, being thoroughly artificial, was destined not to last. The stirring actions of real men, portrayed in the older heroic literature, had been replaced by fantastic adventures of impossible heroes, who were defeated in the end by their own perfections. The makers of romance sighed, like Alexander, for more worlds to conquer, but found them not. Their heroes became usually little more than convenient puppets in whom centred a marvellous array of tournaments, crusades, and adventures with magicians and fairies. The temporary craze for such stories accounts for the popular version of our romance, in which Florice is made to encounter and overcome several formidable adversaries on behalf of Blancheflour. Such adventures, however, were mere excrescences. In the real story the intensity is increased rather than lessened by the youth and physical weakness of Florice. No doubt our forefathers, in the days when man depended for personal security on 'God and his right hand', delighted to hear how roving knights carved out kingdoms for themselves in Italy and France by means of indiscriminate slaughter; but they probably delighted still more to hear a story whose theme was the power of love, which was able to send a delicate boy on a long and dangerous voyage, to risk the chance of death or slavery, and, when the time came, to face a painful death so stead-

¹ See *Beves of Hamtoun*, ll. 4532 f. Beves and his two sons kill 32,000 men in a London street-fight.

fastly and with such manifest desire to sacrifice himself for his loved one, as to win the sympathy even of his enemies.

Although the theme is one likely to be of lasting interest to readers in all ages, the treatment, in both the French and English versions, especially in the former, is not such as to appeal greatly to English readers. The details, as we should expect of an Eastern story, make the romance too enervating, voluptuous, and sentimental. Florice is also, perhaps, too fragile and delicate for English tastes; and, although we cannot help being moved by the pathos of their tragic love, we are—in the opening scenes—often amused and sometimes disgusted at the effusive expressions of love by children of such tender age.¹ It was a common fault in later medieval literature to overstep all reasonable bounds when attempting to increase the emotional intensity. What is meant to be tragic often becomes ludicrous, and the art, so well displayed earlier in the Icelandic Sagas, of increasing the intensity by increasing the realism had been replaced by a straining after fantastic effects, which finally caused the romances to fall into disrepute. The author of the French romance² was skilful enough to see that everything must be subordinated to the love-theme, and has produced a charming and well-told romance; but, although sufficiently wise to avoid superfluous and distracting adventures, he fell into the opposite error of emphasizing the childrens' early love too strongly and in too voluptuous a manner. The English romance, being based on the French, naturally has the same failing, though to a smaller extent.

¹ Fortunately, most of the early love-passages are omitted in the English poem.

² i. e. the Aristocratic version.

Since the English poem, even when complete, must have been little more than one-third the length of the French, a comparison will serve to show the skill with which the French original has been abridged. A careful survey of the various European versions¹ has shown that the English poem was based, not upon any existing French romance, but upon the original French poem of which the Aristocratic version is a copy. Many passages in the English poem illustrate how closely the original has been followed; see notes to ll. 173, 226, 453, 628, 657, 703, 909, 980, &c.

Apparently, also, the poet attempted, wherever possible, to keep the original rhymes.² The thread of the story is faithfully retained, and the important passages closely followed. The only material alteration is an enormous reduction in details, whereby the romance becomes less prolix; but, although the French poem is in parts unnecessarily longwinded, the English poem errs far more in its brevity. By the omission or reduction of descriptive passages, and of illustrative scenes and episodes, the framework is often left too bare. Where the English poet is satisfied with referring to the disguise adopted by Florice, the French poet was careful to show how skilfully he acted his part by purchasing goods and discussing business with the innkeepers. A very realistic tavern scene in the French version has been despoiled of its best parts, the joviality and feasting of the merchants, and the excitement of Florice on hearing news of his betrothed, which caused him to upset the wine, and therefore to pay the forfeit³ demanded by his table-companions. Beautiful or majestic scenery apparently

¹ See Hausknecht, introd. to his edition.

² See the note to l. 33.

³ Free drink for all at the table—similar in motive to the ‘sconcing’ in some Oxford Colleges.

made no appeal to the English poet, or so we must conclude from his neglect to describe the picturesque site of the seaport, placed on a high rock from which a man can see a hundred leagues in every direction.

Sometimes an episode of great beauty and dramatic effect has been omitted; no mention is made of the error of the Emir's chamberlain, who, misled by Florice's beauty, mistakes him for a girl, and—which is even more dramatic—supposes him to be Clarice, whose great friendship for Blanche-flour is well known. The intensity rises to a great pitch when he tells the Emir that Blanche-flour is asleep, but should be forgiven for her neglect, because of her great love for Clarice, in whose arms she is sleeping. The indignant reply of the Emir, who points to Clarice standing behind him, is the most dramatic passage in the romance. Omitted also is the beautiful description of Blanche-flour's bower, when the Emir has drawn aside the curtain, and the morning sun lights up the beautiful faces of the lovers clasped in each others arms.¹

Not all the omissions, however, are blunders. Many of the French episodes and descriptions are of doubtful value, or too fully detailed. In describing the cup² given by the merchants in exchange for Blanche-flour, the action of the poem is unnecessarily delayed by a long account of the siege of Troy, and of the judgement of Paris, which caused it. Such passages are often beautiful in themselves, but delay the principal action. The same may also be said of the very full description of the surroundings of the fictitious tomb, and the figures engraved upon it. The French poet,

¹ It is impossible, however, to judge how far such omissions are due to the original English author, and how far to imperfect memorizing by minstrels.

² See l. 163.

like many of his brethren in all periods, was often so absorbed in the artistic elaboration of his episodes and scenes as to neglect the story.

Many of the passages omitted by the English poet were not only unnecessary but must even be regarded as blemishes. No audience would wish to hear repeated catalogues of exact details, such as the amount of money paid for Blancheflour, or given by Florice to the sailors, and the various kinds of food placed before Florice at the inns. Stock descriptions of horses and saddles, or of the details of a lady's beauty—concluded by the conventional remark that no poet could possibly describe her with full justice—must also have become very wearisome. And just as the French poet could not resist the temptation to linger over his descriptions, so he was tempted to add a little moralizing in the shape of a long philosophical meditation by Florice intended to prove that life without love is worthless, and that it is better to die seeking this love than to live in luxury without it. Unfortunately, in order to accomplish this, he has to make Florice suggest to himself the most heinous sin of which a knight could be convicted and weigh up the arguments in favour of returning home to luxury and marriage with a princess of his father's choice. The only passage of value in this episode, and one which the English poet might well have retained, is that describing the sudden inspiration which comes to Florice on seeing the figure of Paris engraved on his cup. If Paris could win and hold Helen in spite of the whole Greek host, why can he not win back Blancheflour?

In at least two places a definite improvement has been made in the structure of the plot, either by the original English poet or by a later minstrel. The Emir's custom of being attended at his morning toilet

by two maidens from his harem¹ is related, in the French poem, by one of the innkeepers, and has to be repeated later when needed to show how Florice came to be discovered. The first recital is very properly omitted in the English poem.² Again, the gambling scene is related more sensibly by the English poet. An avaricious gambler would be pleased, but not necessarily suspicious, if his opponent, on winning, forgot to demand payment of the stakes. But any gambler would be very suspicious if the winner actually gave him money in addition, as Florice was advised to do in the French version. This stupid episode occurs in the Cambridge MS. and therefore, presumably, in the original English romance. The Auchinleck and Trentham MSS. very wisely alter.

The result is, therefore, what we should expect in an adaptation of a beautiful French romance by a mediocre English poet. The story, with its simple pathos, and the intensity of the hero's devoted love, appealed to him, but he was satisfied with relating all the essential episodes and with emphasizing, to the best of his ability, the dramatic and tragic passages. He was unable to heighten its inherent beauty by such artifices as were employed by the French poet, and, following the thread of the story, he was too impatient to linger over the beautiful pictures of the original.³ Yet perhaps he was wise. The most stirring theme necessarily loses somewhat in translation, but the decorative elaboration of the original will often lose much more, so much, perhaps, as to become even a fault. Undoubtedly the descriptive passages, where

¹ See l. 980 and note.

² The reverse is seen (l. 198) when the Emir's intention of marrying Blanchefleur is related in a place where such details could hardly be known. In the French poem it is told much later.

³ For the converse, however, see 'The Squyr of Lowe Degre', where the descriptions are painted with a lavish hand, and the plot neglected.

they remain, are the weakest parts of the English poem, although in the French, even where superfluous, they are always beautiful. In his haste, also, the English poet omits many of the necessary connecting links; he never clearly explains how the various inn-keepers come to know Blanche-flour's name, and rarely why they mention her to Florice.

In its English dress, therefore, it is the story rather than the poem which interests. It is a story which, although too medieval to be re-told satisfactorily by a modern writer, is yet of eternal interest, and one, which with its singleness and simplicity of theme, is best told in a simple, unaffected way. And such was the aim of the English poet, even though his narrative sometimes becomes too bald. The words spoken by Florice over the tomb¹ well illustrate this. The beauties and virtues of the Christian maid, his own undying love and tragic grief, are told with a simplicity that is rarely excelled in medieval story. Great tragedy and pathos are best told simply, for full portrayal so often renders them contemptible. The octosyllabic verse—then almost universal—is too short and rapid for the theme, and this unavoidable defect is increased by the excessive use of rhyming tags.² Yet the pathos is often forcibly impressed upon the reader, although the restraint necessary for this is rare in our early literature. The description of Florice's return from Montargis, and his unavailing search for Blanche-flour is rendered very vivid by the use of direct speech and by the abruptness of the questions and answers. Most of the critical passages have retained their full dramatic effect—the king's growing anger at his son's infatuation, the queen's anxious plea on behalf of her sole remaining child, Blanche-flour's despair at the thought of becoming the Emir's

¹ Lines 271 f.

² Lines 12, 72, 395, 503, &c.

wife, and especially the judgement scene—all are skilfully told without any of the common medieval moralizing, and in a manner which shows that the story was of vital interest to the translator. And although there are many stories in medieval romance equally well told, there are few which have preserved this interest so completely, the simple and permanent interest of the love-story, of irresistible appeal to men and women of all ages and countries.

*It hath and schal ben euermore
That loue is maister wher he wile
Ther can no lif make other skile.*

Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, Bk. I. 34 f.

In conclusion, I must add that this work has been rendered possible only by very generous help, especially from Mr. E. V. Gordon, Mr. K. Sisam, and Professor Renwick, who have unceasingly aided me by reading various parts of the work and making most fruitful suggestions for improvement. I have to thank the Curators of the Advocates' Library for permission to publish from the Auchinleck MS., and my gratitude is due both to them and to the officials of the British Museum who both promptly and courteously arranged for rotographs to be made of the copies in the Auchinleck and Trentham MSS. respectively. I am also indebted to the Armstrong College Research Fund for defraying the cost of the rotographs, and to Professor Mawer and Dr. Bradshaw for help in obtaining various books of reference.

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June 5, 1924.

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FLORIS
AND
BLAUNCHEFLOUR

THE TEXT

THE manuscripts¹ differ so widely that any attempt to reconstruct in detail the lost original poem must be unsatisfactory. The Auchinleck MS.,² being the most complete, has been taken as the basis of the text; it is reproduced in full, including even a few passages (printed out in the notes) which appear to be additions to the original poem. Passages lacking in the Auchinleck MS. have been added from the other manuscripts when they are proved by comparison with the French poem to be genuine. These additions are printed in italics. The first 382 lines of the text are derived from the Trentham MS. except for sixteen lines from the Cotton Vitellius MS. Alterations of the manuscript texts have been made only when the sense seemed to have been corrupted, except that corrupted rhymes have usually been restored, and spellings with a superfluous *h* (as *hore* = *ore* 'pity') have been removed to the footnotes. No attempt has been made to restore the original metrical form, the details of which are uncertain, or to correct the copyists' careless treatment of final unaccented *-e*. Manuscript contractions have been expanded, and the unfamiliar *ȝ* when used for *ȝ* altered to *j* without notice. The punctuation and capitals have been adapted to modern usage.

¹ See introduction, p. 15.

² The editions of Hartshorne and of the Abbotsford Club from this MS. are neither accurate nor easily accessible.

FLORIS

AND

BLAUNCHEFLOUR

NE thurst men neuer in londe
 After feirer children fonde.
Þe Cristen woman fedde hem þoo,
 Ful wel she louyd hem boþ twoo ;
 So longe she fedde hem in feere 5
 Þat þey were of elde of seuen zere.
Þe king behelde his sone dere,
 And seyde to him on this manere,
 Þat harme it were mucche more
 But his son were sette to lore, 10
 On þe book letters to know,
 As men don both hye and lowe.
 'Feire sone', he seide, 'þou shalt lerne.
 Lo, þat þou do ful zerne.'
Florys answerd wiþ wepyng 15
 As he stod byfore þe kyng ;
 Al wepyng seide he,
 'Ne shal not Blauncheflour lerne wiþ me ?
 Ne can y nozt to scole goon
 Wipout Blaunchefloure' he seide þon ; 20
 'Ne can y in no scole syng ne rede
 Wipout Blauncheflour', he seide.
Þe king seide to his soon,
 'She shal lerne for þy loue'.

1-382 All this section except 275-8 and 291-302 (from *V*) is from *T*,
 and is lacking in *A* and *C*. 13 he: *MS.* she. 20 þon: *MS.* þan.

To scole þey were pytte ; 25
 Boþ þey were good of wytte.
 Wonder it was of hur lore,
 And of her loue wel þe more.
 Þe children louyd togeder soo,
 Þey myzt neuer parte atwoo. 30
 When þey had fīue zere to scoole goo,
 So wel þey had lerned þoo,
 Inow3 þey couþ of Latyne
 And wel wryte on parchemyn.
 Þe kyng understod þe grete amoure 35
 Bytwene his son and Blanchefloure,
 And þouzt, when þey were of age,
 Þat her loue wolde nozt swage,
 Nor he myzt nozt her loue wiþdrawe
 When Florys shuld wyfe after þe lawe. 40
 Þe king to þe queene seide þoo
 And tolde hur of his woo,
 Of his þouzt and of his care
 How it wolde of Floreys fare.
 ' Dame,' he seide, ' y tel þe my reed : 45
 I wyl þat Blaunche flour be do to deed,
 When þat maide is yslawe
 And brouzt of her lyfdawe,
 As sone as Florys may it underzete
 Rathe he wylle hur forzete ; 50
 Þan may he wyfe after reed.'
 Þe queene answerd þen and seid,
 And þouzt wiþ hur reed
 ' Saue þe mayde fro þe deed ;
 ' Sir,' she seide, ' we auzt to fond 55
 Þat Florens lyf wiþ menske in lond,
 And þat he lese not his honour
 For þe mayden Blaunche flour ;

Floris and Blaunche flour

31

*Who-so myzt take þat mayde clene,
þat she ne were brouzt to deþ bydene,* 60
Hit were mucche more honour

*þan slee þat mayde Blanche flour.
Vnneþes þe king graunt þat it be soo :*
' Dame, rede vs what is to do.'

' Sir, we shul oure soon Florys 65
Sende into þe londe of Mountargis.

*Blythe wyl my suster be
þat is lady of þat contree.*

*And when she woot for whon
þat we haue sent him vs from* 70

*She wyl doo al hur myzt,
Boþ by day and by nyzt,
To make hur loue so vndoo*

*As it had neuer ben soo.
And, sir,' she seide, ' y rede eke* 75

*þat þe maydens moder make hur seek ;
þat may be þat other resoun*

*For þat ylk encheson
þat she may not fro her moder goo.'*

Now ben þese children swyþ woo. 80
Now þey may not goo in fere ;

*Drewryer þinges neuer noon were.
Florys wept byfore þe kyng*

*And seide, ' Sir, wipout lesyng,
For my harme out 3e me sende,* 85

*Now she ne myzt wip me wende ;
Now we ne mot togeder goo,*

Al my wele is turned to woo'.

*þe king seide to his soon aplyzt,
' Sone, wipynne þis fourtenyzt,* 90

*Be her moder quykke or deed,
Sekerly', he hym seide,*

59 take supplied.

60 ne supplied.

63 graunt : MS. gunt.

69 whon : MS. whom.

70 from : MS. from.

'pat mayde shal come þe too'.
 '3e, sir,' he seid, 'y pray 3ow it be soo.
 3if þat 3e me hur sende, 95
 I rekke neuer wheder y wende.'
 pat þe child graunted þe kyng was fayn,
 And him betauzt his chamburlayn.
 Wiþ muche honoure þey þeder coom,
 As fel to a ryche kynges soon. 100
 Wel feire him receyuyd þe duke Orgas,
 pat king of þat castel was,
 And his aunt wiþ muche honour;
 But euer he pouzt on Blanchefloure,
 Glad and blythe þey ben him withe, 105
 But for no ioy þat he seith
 Ne myzt him glade game ne gle,
 For he myzt not his lyf see.
 His aunt set him to lore
 þere as other children wore, 110
 Boþ maydons and grom;
 To lerne mony þeder coom.
 Inow3 he sykes, but nozt he lernes,
 For Blaunche flour euer he mornes.
 If enyman to him speke, 115
 Loue is on his hert steke;
 Loue is at his hert-roote,
 pat no þing is so soote;
 Galyngale ne lycorys
 Is not so soote as hur loue is, 120
 Ne nothing ne non other flour.
 So much he þenkeþ on Blancheflour,
 Of oo day him þynkeþ þre,
 For he ne may his loue see.
 þus he abydeth wiþ muche woo 125
 Tyl þe fourtenyzt were goo,

When he saw she was nouzt ycoom,
 So muche sorow he haf noom
 Pat he loueth mete ne drynke,
 Ne may noon in his body synke. 130
 Pe chamberlcy n sent pe kyng to wete
 His sones state al ywrete.
 Pe king ful sone pe waxe tobrake
 For to wete what it spake.
 He begynneth to chaunge his mood, 135
 And wel sone he vnderstode,
 And wiþ wreth he cleped pe queene
 And tolde hur all his teene,
 And wiþ wrap spake and sayde :
 ' Let do bryng forþ þat mayde ! 140
 Fro pe body pe heued shal goo.'
 Penne was pe queene ful woo.
 Pan spake pe queene, þat good lady :
 ' For Goddes loue, sir, mercy !
 At pe next hauen þat here is 145
 Per ben chapmen ryche, ywys,
 Marchaundes of Babyloyn ful ryche
 Pat wol hur bye blethelyche.
 Pan may ze for þat louely foode
 Haue muche catell and goode, 150
 And so she may fro vs be brouzt,
 Soo þat we slee hur nouzt.'
 Vnnepes pe king graunted þis,
 But forsoth so it is.
 Pe king let sende after pe burgeise, 155
 Pat was hende and curtayse,
 And welle selle and bygge couth,
 And moony langages had in his mouth.
 Wel sone þat mayde was him betauzt,
 An to pe hauen was she brouzt. 160
 Ther have pey for þat maide zolde
 Twenty mark of reed golde,

34 *Floris and Blaunche flour*

And a coupe good and ryche—
In al þe world was non it lyche ;
þer was neuer noon so wel graue ; 165
He þat it made was no knave.
þer was purtrayd on, y weene,
How Paryse ledde away þe queene,
And on the couercle aboue
Purtrayde was þer her bother loue ; 170
And in þe pomel peron
Stood a charbuncle stoon ;
In þe world was not so depe soler,
þat it nold lyzt þe botelere
To fylle boþ ale and wyne. 175
Of syluer and gold boþ good and fyne . . .
Enneas þe king, þat nobel man,
At Troye in batayle he it wan
And brouzt it into Lumbardy
And gaf it to Lauine, his amy. 180
þe coupe was stoole fro king Cesar ;
A þeeff out of his tresour hous it bar,
And sethe þat ilke same þeeff
For Blaunche flour he it zeef,
For he wyst to wynne suche þree, 185
Myzt he hur bryng to his contree.
Now þese marchaundcs saylen ouer þe see
Wip þis mayde to her contree.
So longe þey han vndernome
þat to Babyloyn þey ben coom. 190
To þe Amyral of Babylon
þey solde þat mayde swythe soon.
Rath and soone þey were at oon ;
þe Amyral hur bouzt anoon
And gafe for hur as she stood vpryzt 195
Seuyn sythes of gold her wyzt ;

170 her bother: *MS.* both her.

180 to Lauine: *MS.* his leman.

191 *MS.* Babyloyn.

*For he pouzt wipout weene
 pat faire mayde haue to queene.
 Among his maydons in his bour
 He hur dide wip mucche honour. 200
 Now pese merchaundes pat may belete
 And ben glad of hur byzete.*

*Now let we of Blanche flour be
 And speke of Florys in his contree.
 Now is þe burgays to þe king coom 205
 Wip þe gold and his garsome,
 And haf take þe king to wolde
 þe seluer and þe coupe of golde,
 They lete make in a chirche
 A swithe feire graue wyrche 210
 And lete ley þer-vppon
 A new feire peynted stone,
 Wip letters al aboute wryte
 Wip ful mucche worshipp.*

*Whoso couth þe letters rede, 215
 þus þey spoken and þus þey seide :
 ' Here lyth swete Blaunche flour
 pat Florys louyd þar amour.'*

*Now Florys haf vndernome,
 And to his fader he is coome. 220
 In his fader halle he is lyzt ;
 His fader he grette anoonryzt
 And his moder þe queene also ;
 But vnnepes myzt he þat doo
 pat he ne asked where his leman bee ; 225
 Nonskyns answeere chargeþ hee.
 So longe he is forth noom,
 Into chamber he is coom ;*

203 Now : *MS.* ow (space left for a capital N).
 206 garsome ; *MS.* garyson.
 him, V he.

205 *MS.* bugays.
 210 A : *MS.* As.
 222 he : *MS.*

þe maydenys moder he asked ryzt,
'Where is Blaunche flour, my swete wyzt?' 230
'Sir,' she seide, 'forsothe, ywys,
I ne woot where she is.'
She bepouzt hur on þat lesyng
þat was ordeyned byfore þe king.
'þou gabbest me,' he seyde þoo, 235
'þy gabbyng doþ me mucche woo.
Tel me where my leman be.'
Al wepyng seide þen shee:
'Sir,' she seide, 'deed.' 'Deed!' seide he.
'Sir,' she seide, 'forsothe, 3ee.' 240
'Allas, when died þat swete wyzt?'
'Sir, wiþynne þis fourtenyzt
þe erth was leide hur aboue,
And deed she was for thy loue.'
Flores, þat was so feire and gent, 245
Sownyd þere verament.
þe Cristen woman began to crye
To Jesu Crist and Seynt Marye.
þe king and þe queene herde þat crye;
Into þe chamber þey ronne on hye, 250
And þe queene herde her byforn
On sowne þe childe þat she had born.
þe kinges hert was al in care,
þat sawe his son for loue so fare.
When he awooke and speke myzt, 255
Sore he wept and sore he syzt,
And seide to his moder, ywys,
'Lede me þere þat mayde is'.
þeder þey him brouzt on hyze;
For care and sorow he wold dyze. 260
As sone as he to þe graue com,
Sone þere behelde he þon

243 aboue: *MS.* aboute, *V* aboue.
 262 þon: *MS.* þen.

255 myzt: *MS.* mozt.

And þe letters began to rede,
þat þus spake and þus seide :
' Here lyth swete Blaunche flour 265
þat Florys louyd þar amoure.'
þre sithes Florys sownydde nouth,
Ne speke he myzt not wiþ mouth.
As sone as he awoke and speke myzt,
Sore he wept and sore he syzt ; 270
' Blaunche flour !' he seide, ' Blaunche flour !'
So swete a þing was neuer in bourre !
Of Blaunche flour is þat y meene,
For she was com of good ken.
Vor in worle nes nere non 275
þine imake of no wimmon.
Inouþ þou cupest of clergie
And of alle curteysie ;
Lytel and mucche loueden þe
For þy fayrhede and þy bonte. 280
þif deþ were dalt aryzt
We shuld be deed boþ on oo nyzt ;
On oo day born we were,
We shul be deed boþ in feere.
Deeþ,' he seide, ' ful of enuye 285
And of alle trechorye,
Refte þou hast me my leman.
Forsoth,' he seide, ' þou art to blame ;
She wolde haue leuyd, and þou noldest,
And fayn wolde y dye, and þou woldest. 290
Whider me wolde þat þou were
Nultou nowizt come þere,
And þer me wolde þat þou ne come,
þer þou wolt come ilome.

274 ken : MS. kyn. 275-8 from V, lacking in T. 280 MS.
 goodnesse and þy beaute, V fayrhede and þy bunte. 291-302 from
 V, lacking in T. 291 Whider : MS. Wiþ þere.

þilke þat buþ best to libbe, 295
 Hem þou stikest vnder þe ribbe ;
 And ȝif þer is eni forliued wrecche
 þat of is liue nouȝt ne recche,
 þat fawe wolde deic for sorowe and elde,
 On hem neltou nouȝt bihelde. 300
 No lengore ich nelle mi lef bileue,
 Ichulle be mid hyre ere eue.
*After deef clepe no more y nylle,
 But slee myself now y wille.¹*
His knyf he braide out of his sheth, 305
Himself he wolde haue doo to deth,
And to hert he had it smeten,
Ne had his moder it vnderzeten.
þen þe queene fel him vppon
And þe knyf fro him noom. 310
She reft him of his lytel knyf
And sauȝd þere þe childes lyf.
Forþ þe queene ranne al wepyng
Tyl she com to þe kyng.
þan seide þe good lady : 315
' For Goddes loue, sir, mercy !
Of twelue children haue we noon
On lyue now but þis oon,
And better it were she were his make
þan he were deed for hur sake.' 320
' Dame, þou seist soþ,' seide he,
' Sen it may noon other be,
Leuer me were she were his wyf
þan y lost my sonnes lyf.'
Of þis word þe quene was fayn, 325
And to her soon she ran agayn.
' Floryes, son, glad make the,
þy lef þou shalt on lyue see ;

Florys, son, prouz engynne
Of þy faders reed and myne 330
þis graue let we make,

Leue son, for thy sake ;
3if þou þat maide forgete woldest,
After oure reed wyf þou sholdest.
Now euery word she haþ him tolde 335
How þat þey þat mayden solde.

'Is þis soth, my moder dere ?'
'Forsoth,' she seide, 'she is not here.'

þe rouwz stoon adoun þey leyde
And sawe þat þer was not þe mayde. 340

'Now, moder, y þink þat y leue may,
Ne shal y rest nyzt ne day,
Nyzt ne day ne no stound,
Tyl y haue my lemon found ;
Hur to seken y woll wend 345

þauz it were to þe worldes ende.'
To þe king he goþ to take his leue,
And his fader bade him byleue.

'Sir, y wyl let for no wynne ;
Me to bydden it were grete synne.' 350

þan seid þe king : 'Seth it is soo,
Sep þou wylt noon other doo,
Al þat þe nedep we shul þe fynde—
Jesu þe of care vnbynde !'

'Leue fader,' he seide, 'y telle þe 355
Al þat þou shalt fynde me :

þou mast me fynde, at my deuyse,
Seuen horses al of prys,
And twoo ycharged vppon þe molde
Boþ wiþ seluer and wyþ golde, 360
And twoo ycharged wiþ moonay
For to spenden by þe way,

*And þree wiþ clothes ryche,
 Þe best of al þe kyngryche;
 Seuē horses, and seuyn men,* 365
*And þre knaues wiþout hem,
 And þyn own chamburlayn,
 Þat is a wel nobel swayn;
 He can vs both wyssh and reede.
 As marchaundes we shul vs lede.* 370

*His fader was an hynde king;
 Þe coupe of golde he dide him bryng,
 Þat ilke self coupe of golde
 Þat was Blaunche flour for 3olde.
 'Haue þis, soon,' seide þe king,* 375
*'Herewiþ þou may þat swete þing
 Wynne, so may betyde,
 Blaunche flour wiþ þe white syde,
 Blaunche flour, þat faire may.'*

Þe king let sadel a palfray, 380
*Þe oon half white so mylke,
 And þat other reed so sylk.*

*I ne kan telle þou nowt
 How richeliche þe sadel was wrout:
 Þe arsouns were gold pur and fin,* 385
*Stones of vertu set þerin,
 Bigon abouten wiþ orfreis.*

*Þe quen was hende and curteis;
 3he cast her hond to hire fingre
 And drouȝ þerof a riche ringe.* 390

*'Haue nou, sone, here þis ring;
 While þou hit hast, doute þe no þing,
 Ne fir þe brenne, ne drenchen in se,
 Ne iren ne stel schal derie þe;
 And be hit erli and be hit late,* 395
To þi wille þou schalt haue whate.'

Floris and Blaunche flour

41

Weping þai departed nouþe,
And kiste hem wiþ softe mouþe.
þai made for him non oþer chere
þan þai seþe him ligge on bere, 400
*For him ne wende hi neuere mo
Efte to sen, ne dude he no.*

Nou forht þai nime wiþ all main,
Himself and his chaumberlain.
So longe þai han vndernome, 405
To þe hauene þai beþ icome
þer Blaunche flour lay anizt.
Richeliche þai were idizt ;
þe louerd of þe hous was wel hende,
þe child he sette next his ende 410
In þe alprest fairest sete ;
Gladliche þai dronke and ete.

Al þat þerinne were,
Al þai made glade chere,
And ete and dronke echon wiþ oþer, 415
Ac Florice þouzte al anoþer :
Ete ne drinke miȝte he nouȝt,
On Blaunche flour was al his þouȝt.

þe leuedi of þe hous vnderȝat
Hou þis child mourning sat, 420
And seide here louerd wiþ stille dreme :
'Sire,' ȝhe saide, 'nimstow no ȝeme
Hou þis child mourning sit ?
Metē and drink he forȝit.
Litel he eteþ and lasse he drinkeþ ; 425
He nis no marchaunt as me þinkeþ.'

To Florice þan spak ȝhe :
'Child, ful of mourning I þe se,
þous sat herinne þis enderdai
Blaunche flour þat faire mai. 430

401-2 *from C.*
MS. mournig.

410 *ende : MS. hende.*
422 *ȝhe : MS. ȝe.*

420 *mourning :*

Herinne was þat maiden bowȝt,
 And ouer þe se ȝhe was ibrowȝt ;
 Herinne þai bouȝte þat maden swete,
 And wille here eft selle to biȝete.
 To Babiloyne þai wille hire bring 435
 And selle hire to kaiser oȝer to king.
 Þou art ilich here of alle þinge
 Of semblant and of mourning,
 But þou art a man and ȝhe is a maide.'
 Þous þe wif to Florice saide. 440

Þo Florice herde his lemman neuene,
 So bliȝe he was of þat steuene
 Þat his herte bigan al liȝt.
 A coupe of gold he let fulle riȝt.
 ' Dame,' he saide, ' þis hail is þin, 445
 Boȝe þe gold and þe win,
 Boȝe þe gold and þe win eke,
 For þou of mi lemman speke ;
 On hir I þout, for hire I siȝt,
 And wist ich wher hire finde miȝt, 450
 Ne scholde no weder me assoine
 Þat I ne schal here seche at Babiloine.'

Florice rest him þere al niȝt.
 Amorewe whanne hit was dailȝt
 He dide dide him in þe salte flod ; 455
 Wind and weder he had ful god.
 To þe mariners he ȝaf largeliche
 Þat brouȝten him ouer bleȝeliche
 To þe lond þar he wold lende,
 For þai founden him so hende. 460
 Sone so Florice com to londe—
 Wel ȝerne he þankede Godes sonde—
 To þe lond þer his lemman is,
 Him þouȝte he was in Paradis.

Wel sone men Florice tidingges told, 465
 Þe Amerail wolde feste hold,

And kinges an dukes to him come scholde,
 Al þat of him holde wolde,
 For to honure his heȝhe feste
 And also for to heren his heste, 470
 þo Florice herde þis tiding,
 þan gan him glade in alle þing,
 And in his herte þouȝte he
 þat he wolde at þat feste be,
 For wel he hopede in þe halle 475
 His leman sen among hem alle.

So longe Florice haȝ vndernome,
 To a fair cite he is icome ;
 Wel faire men haȝ his in inome,
 Ase men scholde to a kinges sone, 480
 At a palais, was non him iliche.
 þe louerd of þe hous was wel riche,
 And god inow him com to honde
 Boȝe bi water and be londe.
 Florice ne sparede for no fe 485
 Inow þat þere ne scholde be
 Of fissc, of flessch, of tendre bred,
 Boȝe of whit win and of red,
 þe louerd hadde ben wel wide ;
 þe child he sette bi his side 490
 In þe alȝerferste sete.
 Gladliche þai dronke and ete,
 Ac Florice et an drank riȝt nowt,
 On Blaunche flour was al his þouȝt.

þe lord of þe inne vnderȝat 495
þat þis child murninge sat ;
 þan bispak þe bourgeis
 þat hende was, fre and curteys :
 ‘ Child, me þinkkeȝ swiȝe wel
 þi þout is mochel on þi catel.’ 500

493 nowt : *MS.* towȝt.
 495 þe inne : *MS.* þerinne.

494 his : *MS.* hi.

495-6 *from C.*

'Nai, on mi catel is hit nowt,
 On oþer þink is al my þouzt.
 Mi þouzt is, on alle wise,
 Mochel on mi marchaundise,
 And ȝit þat is mi meste wo 505
 Ȝif ich hit finde and schal forgo.'

þanne spak þe louerd of þat inne:
 'þous sat þis oþer dai herinne
 þat faire maide Blaunchefflour.
 Boþe in halle and ek in bour 510
 Euere ȝhe made mourning chere,
 And biment Florice here leue fere;
 Joie ne blisse ne hadde ȝhe none,
 Ac on Florice was al her mone.'

Whanne herde he nempnen his lemman, 515
 Bliþe he was, iwis, for þan;

He het nime a coppe of siluer whit,
 And a mantel of scarlet
 Ipaned al wiþ meniuer,
 And ȝaf his hoste þer. 520

'Haue þis', he saide, 'to þine honour,
 And þou hit miȝte þonke Blaunchefflour.
 Stolen ȝhe was out mine countreie;
 Here ich here seche bi þe waie.
 He miȝte make min herte glad 525
 þat couþe me telle whider ȝhe was lad.'

'Child, to Babiloyne ȝhe is ibrouzt,
 And þe Ameral hire haþ ibouzt:
 He ȝaf for hire, ase ȝhe stod vpriȝt,
 Seuene sithes of gold here wiȝt; 530
 For hire faired and for hire schere
 þe Ameral hire bouȝte so dere,

502 oþer: *MS.* oþe. 509 *MS.* Blainchefflour. 515-16 from *C.*
 517 He: *MS.* Florice. whit: *MS.* whiȝt. 520 hoste: *MS.*
 hostesse. 521 he: *MS.* ȝhe. 524 here: *MS.* ere. 527 is:
MS. his. 528 þe supplied from *T*; hap. *MS.* had. 530 *MS.*
 here gol of wiȝt.

For he þenkeþ, wiþouten wene,
 þat faire mai to hauen to quene.
 Amang oþer maidenen in his tour 535
 He haþ hire ido wiþ mochel honour.'

Nou Florice rest him þere al niȝt.
 On morewe whan hit was dailiȝt
 He aros vp in þe moreweninge,
 And ȝaf his hoste an hondred schillinge, 540
 To his hoste and to his hostesse,
 And nam his leue and gan hem kesse.

And ȝerne he haþ his oste bisouȝt
 þat he him helpe ȝif he mouȝt,
ȝif he a frend in Babiloyne hadde 545
þat him wisede and wel radde

Hou he miȝte wiþ sum ginne
 þe faire maiden to him awinne.

'Child, to one brigge þou schalt come,
 A burgeis þou findest ate frome ; 550
 His paleis is ate brigges ende.

Curteis man he is and hende.
 We beþ wed-brepren and trewþe-ipliȝt :
 He þe can wissen and reden ariȝt.
 þou schalt beren him a ring 555
 Fram miselue to tokning,

þat he þe helpe in eche helue
 So hit were bifalle miselue.'

Floriz herof was wel bliþe,
And þonkede his oste wel suiþe. 560

Florice tok þe ring and nam his leue,
 For þere no leng wolde he bilcue.

541 his: *MS.* hes. 543 haþ: *MS.* had, *C* haþ. oste: *MS.* ostesse,
C oste, *T* ost. 544 he: *MS.* ȝhe. 545-6 *from V (defective)* ;
 ȝif he a *in* 545 and þat him *in* 546 *supplied.* 549 schalt: *MS.*
 schat. 551 is: *MS.* his. 554 reden: *MS.* renden. 559-60
from C.

Bi þat hit was vndren hegh;
 þe brigge he was swiþe neg;
 When he was to þe brigge icome, 565
 þe burgeis he fond ate frome,
 Stondend on a marbel ston;
 Fair man and hende he was one.
 þe burgeis was ihote Dayre.
 Florice him grette swiþe fayre, 570
 And haþ him þe ring irawt
 And wel faire him bitawt,
 þourgh tokning of þat ilke ring
 Florice hadde þer god gestning
 Of fisch, of flessch, of tendre bred, 575
 Boþe of whit win and of red.
 Ac euere Florice sizte ful cold,
 And Darys gan him bihold.
 'Leue child, what may þe be,
 þous carfoul as I þe se? 580
 I wene þou nart nowt al fer,
 þat þou makest þous doelful cher,
 Oþer þe likeþ nowt þin in.'
 Nou Florice answered him:
 'Ȝis, sire, bi Godes ore, 585
 So gode I ne hadde ȝore,
 God late me bide þilke dai
 þat ich þe ȝelde mai,
 Ac I þenke, in alle wise,
 Vpon min owen marchaundise 590
 Wherfore ich am hider come,
 Lest I ne finde hit nowt ate frome;
 And ȝit is þat mi meste wo,
 Ȝif ich hit finde and sschal forgo.'

563 hit: *MS.* his.
 575 *MS.* fischs.
 hore.

567 *MS.* stoned.
 578 bihold: *MS.* bihod.

569 Dayre: *MS.* Daye.
 585 ore: *MS.*

Floris and Blaunche flour 47

þo sede Daris, þe freo burgeis, 595
þat was wel hende and curteis :

‘ Child, woldest þou tel me þi gref,
 To helpe þe me were ful lef.’
 Nou euerich word he haþ him told,
 Hou þe maide was fram him sold, 600
 And hou he was of Speyne a kinges sone,
 And for hir loue þider icome
 For to fonde wiþ som ginne
 þat faire maide to biwinne.

Daris now þat child bihalt, 605
 And for a fol he him halt.

‘ Child,’ he seiþ, ‘ I se hou geþ,
 Iwis þou 3ernest þin owen deþ.
 þameral haþ to his iustening
 Oper half hondred of riche kinge ; 610
 þat alþerrichest kyng

Ne dorste biginne swich a þing,

þilke maide to awinne

Noþer wiþ strengþe ne wiþ ginne.
 For miȝte þameral hit vnderȝete, 615
 Sone þou were of liue quite.

Abouten Babiloine, wiþouten wene,

Dureþ sexti longe milen and tene ;

And ate walle þar beþ ate

Seuen siþe twenti ȝate. 620

Twenti toures þer beþ inne

þat euerich dai cheping is inne ;

Nis no dai þourg þe ȝer

þe feire nis þer iliche plener.

Seue hondred toures also þerto 625

Beþ in þe borewe and somdel mo ;

595-6 *from C.*

613-14 *from C.*

624 *MS.* þat scheþing nis þeinne, *C* þe feire is þer iliche.

MS. An, *C* and *V* Seue.

599 haþ : *MS.* had.

615 *MS.* þamerlal.

607 geþ : *MS.* goþ.

618 Dureþ *supplied.*

625 Seue :

þat alderest feblest tour
 Wolde nouzt doute an emperour
 To comen al þer wiþinne,
 Neiþer wiþ strengþe ne wiþ ginne. 630
 And þei alle þe men þat beþ ibore
 Adden hit up here deth iswore,
 þai scholde winne þe mai so sone
 As fram þe heuene heȝ þe sonne and mone.
 And in þe bourh, amide þerizt 635
 þer stant a riche tour, I þe aplyzt.
 An hondred taisen he is heiȝe,
 Wo-so it bihalt fer and neiȝe ;
 And an hondred taisen he is wid,
 And imaked with mochel prid 640
 Of lim and of marbel stone ;
 In Cristiente nis swich non.
 And þe mortar is maked so wel,
 Ne mai no man hit breke wiþ no stel ;
 In þe tur þer is a walle, 645
 Suþe clere hit is wiþalle ;
 He vrneþ in o pipe of bras,
 Whider-so hit ned was.
 Fram flore into flore
 þe strimes vrneþ store, 650
 From bure into halle
 þe strimes of þis walle.
 In þe tur is o kanel
 Of seluer and of crestel.
 And þe pomel aboue þe led 655
 Is iwrouȝt wiþ so moche red
 þat men ne þorfen aniȝt berne
 Neiþer torche ne lanterne.

628 nouzt doute: *MS.* kepe. 632 *MS.* iswore. 636 I supplied:
Ty. 637 An hondred: *MS.* a þousand. is: *MS.* his. 638 *MS.*
 bihalt wit fer and negene. 645-54 from *C.* 645 walle: *MS.*
 welle. 652 walle: *MS.* welle. 653 kanel: *MS.* kernel. 657
 þorfen: *MS.* dforren.

Swich a pomel was neuer bigonne,
Hit schineþ anizt so adai doþ þe sonne. 660

Nou beþ þer inne þat riche toure
Four and twenty maidenenes boure ;
So wel were þat ilke man
þat miȝte wonen in þat an,
Nou þourt him neuere, ful iwis, 665
Willen after more blisse.

Nou beþ þer seriaunts in þe stage
To seruen þe maidenenes of parage,
Ne mai no seriaunt be þerinne
þat in his brech bereþ þe ginne, 670
Neiþer bi dai ne bi niȝt,
But he be ase capoun diȝt.

And at þe gate is a gateward ;
He nis no fol ne no coward.
Ȝif þer comeþ ani man 675

Wiþinne þat ilche barbican,
But hit be bi his leue,
He wille him boþe bete and reve.
þe porter is proud wiþalle :
Euerich dai he goþ in palle 680

And þe Amerail is so wonder a gome
þat euerich ȝer hit is his wone
To chesen him a newe wif,
þei he loueþ his queene as his lyf.

And when he a newe wif vnderfo, 685
Kneweþ hou hit schal be do :

þanne scholle men fechche doun of þe stage
Alle þe maidenenes of parage,
An brenge hem into on orchard,
þe fairest of all middelhard ; 690

667 þer : MS. þe. 670 þe : MS. þet, C þe, T þat. 675 þer :
MS. þe. 684 from T. þei : MS. þen, V þeyȝ. 686 Kneweþ :
MS. He kneweȝ.

þer is merie foulen song ;
 Men miȝte libben euer among.
 Aboute þe orchard goþ a wal,
 þe werste ston is cristal.
 þer man mai sen on þe ston 695
 Mochel of þis werldes wisdom.
 And a welle þere springeþ inne
 þat is wrowt wiþ mochel ginne.
 þe welle is of mochel pris :
 þe strem com fram Paradis, 700
 þe grauel in þe grounde of precieuse stone,
 And of vertu iwis echone,
 Of saphires and of sardoines,
 Of swiþe riche calsidoinen,
Of jacinctes and of topaces, 705
Of onicle of muchel grace,
Of mani anoper direwerþe ston
þat ich nu ne nempne can.
 Nou is þe wale of so mochel eye,
 Ȝif þer comeþ ani maiden þat is forlcie, 710
 And hi bowe to þe grounde
 For to waschen here honde,
 þe water wille welme as hit ware wod
 And bicomme on hire so red so blod.
 Wich maiden þe water fareþ on so, 715
 Hi schal sone be fordo,
 And þilke þat beþ maidenen clene,
 þai mai hem wassche of þe rene ;
 þe water will erne stille and cler,
 Nelle hit hem make no daunger. 720

691 merie *supplied*. 692 euer : *MS.* þer. 702 And : *MS.*
 And. 704 swiþe riche *from C* : *A* oneches and of. 705-8
from C. 705-7 of : *MS.* and ; *second of in 705 supplied.* 709
 wale : *MS.* waie, *C* wal. 710 þer : *MS.* þe, *C* þer. 713 welme :
MS. ȝelle.

At þe welle-heued þer stant a tre,
 Þe fairest þat mai in erthe be.
 Hit is icleped þe tre of loue,
 For floures and blosmes beþ euer aboue ;
So sone so þe olde beoþ idon 725
Þer springeþ niwe rizt anon.
 And þilke þat clene maiden es be,
 Men schal hem bringe vnder þat tre,
 And wiche-so falleþ on þat ferste flour,
 Hi schal ben chosen quen wiþ honour ; 730
 And ȝif þer ani maiden is
 þat þamerail halt of mest pris,
 Þe flour schal on here be went
 Þourh art and þourh enchantement.
 Þous he cheseþ þourȝ þe flour 735
 And euere we harkneþ when hit be Blaunche flour.
 Þre sithes Florice swouned nouþe
 Er he miȝte speke wiþ mouþe.
 Sone he awok and speke miȝt,
 Sore he wep and sore he siȝt. 740
 ‘ Darie,’ he saide, ‘ ich worht ded
 But ich haue of þe help and red.’
 ‘ Leue child, ful wel I se
 þat þou wilt to deþe te.
 Þe beste red þat I can— 745
 Oþer red I ne can :
 Wende to-morewe to þe tour
 Ase þou were a god ginour,
 And nim in þin hond squir and scantiloun
 Als þai þou were a masoun ; 750
 Bihold þe tour vp and doun.
 Þe porter is coluard and feloun ;
 Wel sone he wil come to þe
 And aske what mister man þou be

And ber vpon þe felonie, 755
 And saie þou art comen þe tour aspie.
 þou schalt answeren him swetelich
 And speke to him wel mildelich,
 And sai þou art a ginour
 To beheld þat ilche tour 760
 For to lerne and for to fonde
 To make anoþer in þi londe.
 Wel sone he wil com þe ner
 And bidde þe plaien at þe scheker ;
 To plaien he wil be wel fous 765
 And to winnen of þin wel coueitous.
 When þou art to þe scheker brouzt,
 Wiþouten pans ne plai þou nowt ;
 þou schalt haue redi mitte
 Þritti mark vnder þi slitte. 770
 And ȝif he winne ouȝt of þyn,
 Al leue þou hit wiþ him,
 And ȝif þou winne ouȝt of his,
 þou lete þerof ful litel pris,
Muche he wule þonki þe 775
And of þe suþe iwondred beo.
 Wel ȝerne he wille þe bidde and praie
 þat þou come amorewe and plaie ;
 þou schalt sigge þou wilt so,
 And nim wiþ þe amorewe swich two ; 780
 And euer þou schalt in þin owen wolde
 þi gode cop wiþ þe atholde,
 þat ilke self coppe of golde
 þat was for Blaunche flour iȝolde.
 þe þridde dai bere wiþ þe an hondred pond 785
 And þi coppe al hol and sond.
 Ȝif him markes and pans fale,
 Of þi mone tel þou no tale.

758 *MS.* midelich. 761 *MS.* & for to lerne. 771 of: *MS.* al.
 775-6 *from C.* 782 þe: *MS.* he. 785 hondred: *MS.* dondred.

*Whanne þu lest him þe cupe iseo,
Wel angussus will beo ;* 790

*He wile beo wel coveitus
And hire to bigge suþe fus.
Ihc wot he wille þilke day
Honure þe so mucche so he may.
He wule þe lede to his inne* 795
þe cupe of þe to biwinne.

*Wel 3erne he þe wille bidde and praie
þat þou legge þi coupe to plaie.
þou schalt answeren him ate first,
No lenger to plaie þou ne list.* 800

*Wel moche he wil for þi coupe bede,
3if he miȝt þe better spede.
þou schalt bleþelich 3iuen hit him,
þai hit be gold pur and fin,
And sai, " Me þinkeþ hit wel bisemeþ te,* 805
þai hit were worþ swiche þre " ;

*Sai also þe ne faille non
Gold ne seluer ne riche won.*

*Seie þu wilt parte wiþ him of þan,
þat he schal eure be riche man,* 810

*And he wil þanne so mochel loue þe
þat þou hit schalt boþe ihere and see
þat he wille falle to þi fot
And bcome þi man, 3if he mot.*

His manred þou schalt afonge 815
And þe trewþe of his honde.

*3if þou miȝt þous his loue winne,
He mai þe help wiþ som ginne.'*

Nou also Florice haþ iwrowt 820
Also Darie him haþ itawt,

*þat þourgh his gold and his garsome
þe porter is his man bcome.*

'Nou', quap Florice, 'þou art mi man,
 And al mi trest is þe vpan.
 Nou þou miȝt wel eþe 825
 Arede me fram þe deþe.'
 And euerich word he haþ him told
 Hou Blaunche flour was from him sold,
 And hou he was of Spaine a kinges sone,
 And for hire loue þider icome 830
 To fonde wiþ som ginne
 Þe maiden aȝen to him winne.
 Þe porter þat herde and sore siȝte :
 'Ich am bitraied þourȝ riȝte ;
 Þourȝ þi catel ich am bitraid, 835
 And of mi lif ich am desmaid ;
 Nou ich wot, child, hou hit geþ,
 For þe ich drede to þolie deþ,
 And napeles ich ne schal þe neuere faile mo,
 Þe whiles I mai ride or go, 840
 þi foreward ich wil helden alle,
 What-so wille bitide or falle.
 Wende þou hom into þin in
 Whiles I þink of som ginne.
 Bitwene þis and þe þridde dai 845
 Don ich wille þat I mai.'
 Florice spak and wep among ;
 Þat ilche terme him þouȝte wel long.
 Þe porter þouȝte what to rede ;
 He let floures gaderen in þe mede ; 850
 He wiste hit was þe maidenenes wille.
 Two coupen he let of floures fille.
 Þat was þe rede þat he þouȝt þo,
 Florice in þat o coupe do.
 Tweie gegges þe coupe bere— 855
 So heui charged þat wroþ þai were ;

840 þe : *MS.* þer, *T* þe.853 *MS.* he þouȝt he þout þo.

þai bad God ʒif him euel fin
 þat so mani floures dede þerin—
 þider þat þai weren ibede.
 Ne were þai nowt ariʒt birede, 860
 Acc þai turned in hire left hond
 Blaunche floures bour anond,
 To Clarice bour þe coupe þai bere
 Wiþ þe floures þat þerinne were.
 Þere þe couppe þey sette adoun, 865
 And ʒaf him here malisoun
 þat so fele floures hem brouʒte on honde;
 þai wenten forht and leten þe coppe stonde.
 Clarice to þe coppe com and wolde
 þe floures handlen and biholde. 870
 Florisse wende hit hadde ben his swet wiʒt;
 In þe coupe he stod vpriʒt,
 And þe maide al for drede
 Bigan to schriechen an to grede.
 Þo he seghʒ hit nas nowth ʒhe 875
 Into þe coupe he stirte aʒe,
 And held him bitraied al clene,
 Of his deþ he ne ʒaf nowt a bene.
 Þer come to Clarice maidenen lepe,
 Bi ten, be twenti in one hepe, 880
 And askede what here were,
 þat hi makede so loude bere.
 Clarice hire vnderstod anonriʒt
 þat hit was Blaunche flour swete wiʒt;
 For here boures neʒ were, 885
 And selden þat þai neren ifere,
 And aiþer of oþer counseil þai wiste,
 And michel aiþer to oþer triste.

862 anond: *MS.* an hond. 867 hem: *MS.* em. 870 handlen: *MS.* handleden, 875 he: *MS.* ʒhe. ʒhe: *MS.* he. 884 *MS.* þat swete.

Hii ȝaf hire maidenenes answere anon
 ȝat into boure ȝai sscholden gon : 890
 'To ȝis coupe ich cam and wolde
 ȝe floures handli and biholde,
 Ac er ich hit euer wiste
 A boterfleȝe toȝain me fluste.
 Ich was sor adrad of ȝan, 895
 ȝat sschrichen and greden I bigan.'
 ȝe maidenenes hadde ȝerof gle,
 And turnede aȝen and let Clarisse be.
 So sone so ȝe madenes weren agon,
 To Blaunchefflours bour Clarice wente anon, 900
 And saide leyende to Blaunchefflour :
 'Wiltou sen a ful fair flour,
 Swiche a flour ȝat ȝe schal like ?
 Haue ȝou sen hit a lite.
Hit ne greu noȝt on ȝis londe,
ȝat flur ȝat ihc bringe ȝe to honde.' 905
 'Auoy ! dameisele,' quaf Blaunchefflour,
 'To scorne me is litel honour.
Ho ȝat luueȝ ȝar amures
And haȝ ȝerof ioye mai luue flures. 910
 Ich ihere, Clarice, wiȝoute gabbe,
 ȝe Ameral wil me to wiue habbe ;
 Ac ȝilke dai schal neuer be
 ȝat men schal atwite me
 ȝat I schal ben of loue vntrewe, 915
 Ne chaungi loue for non newe
 For no loue ne for non eie,
 So doȝ Floris in his contreie.
 Nou I schal swete Florice misse,
 Schal non oȝer of me haue blisse.' 920
 Clarice stant and bihalt ȝat reuȝe,
 And ȝe treunesse of ȝis treuȝe.

905-6 *from C.*907 auoy: *MS.* auoȝ.909-10 *from C.*910 amures: *MS.* amure.919 I *supplied.*

Leizande sche saide to Blaunche flour,
'Com nou, se þat ilche flour'.

To þe coupe þai zeden þo. 925

Wel blisful was Florisse þo,

For he had iherd al þis ;

Out of þe coupe he stirte, iwis.

Blaunche flour chaungede hewe ;

Wel sone aiþer oþer knewe. 930

Wiþouten speche togidere þey lepe,

þai clepte and keste and eke wepe.

Hire cussing laste a mile,

And þat hem þouzte litel while.

Clarice bihalt al þis, 935

Here contenaunce and here blis,

And leizende saide to Blaunche flour,

'Felawe, knouestou ouzt þis flour ?

Litel er noldest þou hit se,

And nou þou ne miȝt hit lete fro þe. 940

He moste conne mochel of art

þat þou woldest ȝif þerof ani part.'

'*Certes, quaf Blaunche flour to Clariz,*

'*þis is min ozene suete Floriz.*'

Boþe þise swete þinges for blis - 945

Falleþ doun here fet to kis,

And criep hire merci al weping

þat ȝhe hem biwraie nowt to þe king,

To þe king þat ȝhe hem nowt biwreie

Wherþourgh þai were siker to deye. 950

þo spak Clarice to Blaunche flour

Wordes ful of fin amour :

'Ne doute ȝou nammore wiþalle

þan to miself hit hadde bifalle.

Wite ȝe wel witerli 955

þat hele ich wille ȝoure boþer druri.'

932 þai: *MS.* þat. 943-4. *from C.*
biwraie. 955 wite ȝe: *MS.* white ȝhe.

949 biwreie: *MS.*

Floris and Blaunche flour

To on bedde 3he haþ hem ibrowt
þat was of silk and sendal wrou.
þai sette hem þere wel softe adoun,
And Clarice drow3 þe courtyn roun. 960
þo bigan þai to clippe and kisse,
And made joie and mochele blisse.

Florice ferst speke bigan
And saide, 'Louerd, þat madest man,
þe I þanke, Godes sone ; 965
Nou al mi care ich haue ouercome,
And nou ich haue mi lef ifounde
Of al mi kare ich am vnbounde.'

Nou haþ aiþer oþer itold
Of mani a car foul cold, 970
And of mani pine stronge,
þat þai han ben atwo so longe.
Clarice hem seruede al to wille
Boþe dernelich and stille.

Non oþer heuene hi ne bede 975
But eure swich lif to lede,
But so ne miȝte 3he hem longe iwite
þat hit ne sscholde ben vnderȝete.

Nou hadde þe Amerail swiche a wone
þat eueri dai þer sscholde come 980
Two maidenen vt of hire bour
To seruen him vp in þe toure,
þat on wiþ towaille and bacyn
For to wasschen his hondes in,
þat oþer scholde bringe combe and mirour 985
To seruen him wiþ gret honour ;
And þai þai seruede him neuer so faire,
Amorewen scholde anoþer paire.

960 roun : *MS.* rouin. 975-6 from *C.* 980 eneri : *MS.* euer.
981 Two : *MS.* þre. 983 *MS.* Wiþ water and cloþ, *C* þat bringe
towaille. 985 þat oþer : *MS.* þe þridde.

Floris and Blaunchefflour 59

And mest was woned into þe tour
þer to Clarice and Blaunchefflour. 990

So long him seruede þe maidenen route
þat hire seruice was comen aboute.

On þe morewen þat þider com Florice
Hit fel to Blaunchefflour and Clarice.

Clarice, so wel hire mote bitide, 995
Aros vp in þe morewentide

And clepede after Blaunchefflour

To wende wiþ here into þe tour,

Blaunchefflour saide, 'Ich am comende',
Ac here answeze was al slepende. 1000

Clarice in þe wai is nome

And wende þat Blaunchefflour had come.

Sone so Clarice com in þe tour

þe Ameral asked after Blaunchefflour.

'Sire,' ȝhe saide anonriȝt, 1005

'Ȝhe haȝ iwaked al þis niȝt

And ikneled and iloke

And irad vpon hire boke,

And bad to God here oreisoun

þat he þe ȝiue his benisoun 1010

And þe helde longe aliue ;

Nou sche slepeȝ al so swiȝe,

Blaunchefflour, þat maiden swete,

þat hii mai nowt comen ȝhete.'

'Certe,' said þe kyng, 1015

'Nou is hi a swete þing ;

Wel auȝte ich here ȝerne to wiue,

Whenne ȝhe bit so for mi liue.'

On þe morewe Clarice arist

And haȝ Blaunchefflour atwist 1020

þat hi made so longe demoere :

'Aris vp and go we ifere.'

1006 haȝ: *MS.* had. 1007 *MS.* & and ikneled. 1019 On þe morewe:
MS. Anoper dai, *C* Amoreȝe. 1021 þat: *MS.* Whi, *C* and *V* þat.

Blaunchefflour saide, ' I come anan ',
 And Florice he klippe bigan,
 And felle aslepe on þis wise ; 1025
 And after hem gan sore agrise.

Clarice to þe piler cam ;
 þe bacyn of gold 3he nam,
 And haþ icleped after Blaunchefflour
 To wende wiþ here into þe tour ; 1030
 3he ne answerede nei ne 3o.

þo wende Clarice 3he ware ago.
 Sone so Clarice come into þe tour,
 þe Ameral asked after Blaunchefflour,
 Whi and wharfore 3he ne come 1035
 As hi was woned to done.

' 3he was arisen ar ich were ;
 Ich wende here hauen ifonden here.
 What, ne is 3he nowt icomen 3it ? '
 ' Now 3he me douteþ al to lit.' 1040

Forht he clepeþ his chaumberleyn,
 And bit him wende wiþ alle main
 And wite wi þat 3he ne come
 As hi was wone bifore to done.

þe chaumberleyn haþ vndernome ; 1045
 Into hir bour he is icome,
 And stant bifore hire bed
 And find þar twai neb to neb,
 Neb to neb and mouþ to mouþ ;
 Wel sone was þat sorewe couþ. 1050

Into þe tour vp he stei3
 And saide his louerd þat he sei3.
 þe Ameral het his sward him bring ;
 Twiten he wolde of þat þinge.
 Forht he nimþ wiþ alle mayn, 1055
 Himself and his chaumberlayn,

1029 haþ : *MS.* had.
MS. his.

1045 haþ : *MS.* had.

1046 is :

Til þaie come þar þai two laie ;
 3it was þe slep fast in hire eye.
 Þe Ameral het hire cloþes keste
 A litel bineþen here breste. 1060
 Þan seȝ he wel sone anon
 Þat on was a man, þat oþer a womman.
 He quok for anguisse þer he stod ;
 Hem to quelle was his mod.
 He him biþouȝte, ar he wolde hem quelle, 1065
 What þai were þai sscholde him telle,
 And siþen he þouȝte hem of dawē don.
 Þe children awoken vnder þon,
 Þai segh þe swerd ouer hem idrawe,
 Adrad þei ben to ben islawe ; 1070
 Þo bispak þe Ameral bold
 Wordes þat scholde sone bi told :
 ‘ Sai me now, þou belami,
 Who made þe so hardi
 For to come into mi tour 1075
 To ligge þer bi Blaunche flour ?
 To wroþerhale ware ȝe bōre.
 Ȝe schollen þolie deþ þerfore.’
 Þanne saide Florice to Blaunche flour,
 ‘ Of oure lif nis non socour ’. 1080
 And mercy þai cride on him so swithe
 Þat he ȝaf hem respit of here liue
 Til he hadde after his baronage sent
 To awreken him þourgȝ jugement.
 Vp he bad hem sitte boþe 1085
 And don on oþer cloþe,
 And sippe he let hem binde fast
 And into prisoun hem he cast,
 Til he had after his barenage sent
 To wreken him þourgh jugement. 1090

1066 þai : *MS.* þat.
MS. hed.

1086 cloþe : *MS.* cloþes.

1089 he :

What helpeþ hit longe tale to sschewe?
 Ich wille 3ou telle at wordes fewe.
 Nou al his baronage haþ vndernome
 And to þe Amerail 3he beþ icome.
 His halle, þat was hei3e ibult, 1095
 Of kynges and dukes was ifult.
 He stod vp among hem alle
 Bi semblaunt swiþe wroþ wiþalle.
 He saide, ' Lordingges of mochel honour,
 3e han herd speken of Blaunche flour, 1100
 Hou ich hire bou3t dere apli3t
 For seuen sithes of gold hire wi3t ;
 For hire faired and hire chere
 Ich hire bou3te allinge so dere.
 For ich þou3te wiþouten wene 1105
 Hire haue ihad to mi quene.
 Bifore hire bed miself I com,
 And fond bi hire an naked grom.
 Þo þai were me so loþe,
 I þou3te to han iqueld hem boþe, 1110
 Ich was so wroþ and so wod ;
 And 3it ich wiþdrou3 mi mod.
 Fort ich haue after 3ou isent
 To awreke me þour3 jugement.
 Nou 3e witen hou hit is agon, 1115
 Awreke me swiþe of mi fon.'
 Þo spak a king of on lond :
 ' We han iherd þis schame and schonde,
 Ac, er we hem to deye wreke,
 We scholle heren þo children speke 1120
 What þai wil speke and segge,
 3if þai ou3t a3ein wil allegge.

1093 haþ : *MS.* had.
 hire wi3t of gold.
 1118 iherd : *MS.* irerd.

1098 wroþ : *MS.* wroþt. 1102 *MS.*
 1109 loþe : *MS.* wroþe, *T and V* loþe.
 1121 segge : *MS.* sigge.

Hit ner nowt riȝt jugement
Wipouten answerere to acouplement.'

þe king of Nubie sede þo :

1125

'*Forsop̃ ne schal hit noȝt go so.*

Hit is riȝt pureȝ alle þing

Felons inome hond-habbing

For to suffre jugement

Bipute answerere oþer acupement.'

1130

After þe children nou men sendeþ ;

Hem to brenne fur men tendeþ.

Twaie seriauntes forþ hem bringe,

Toward here deþ sore wepinge.

Dreri were þis children two ;

1135

Nou aiþer biwepeþ oþeres wo.

Florice saide to Blaunche flour :

'Of oure lif nis non socour ;

Ac min is þe guld and þe vnmeþ

pat þu for me schalt þolie deþ.

1140

Ȝif manken hit þoli miȝt

Twies I scholde die wiþ riȝt,

One for miself, anoþer for þe,

For þis deþ þou hast for me ;

For if I nere into þis tur icume

1145

Wiþ mireȝ þe þu miȝtest herinne wune.'

Blaunche flour saide aȝen þo :

'þe gelt is min of oure boþer wo.'

Florice drow forþ þe ring

pat his moder him ȝaf at his parting.

1150

'Haue nou þis ring, lemman min ;

þou ne schalt nowt die whiles hit is þin.'

Blaunche flour saide þo :

'So ne schal hit neuer go,

1125-30 from C. 1133 seriauntes: MS. Sarazins, V Seriauns,
T seriauntes. bringe: MS. bringeþ. 1139-40 from C. 1145-6
from C.

þat þis ring schal ared me, 1155
 Ne mai ihc no deþ on þe se.
 Florice þe ring here arauzt,
 And hi him azein hit bitauzt;
 On hire he haþ þe ring iþrast
 And hi hit haueþ awai ikast. 1160
 A duk hit seȝ and beȝgh to grounde,
 An was glad þat ring he founde.
 On þis maner þe children come
 Weping to þe fur and to hire dome.
 Bifore al þat folk þai ware ibrowt; 1165
 Dreri was hire boþer þouzt.
 þer nas non so sterne man
 þat þise children loked vpan,
 þat þai ne wolde alle ful fawe
 Here jugement haue wiþdrawe, 1170
 And wiþ grete garisoun hem begge,
 Ȝif þai dorste speke oþer segge,
 For Florice was so fair a ȝongling
 And Blaunche flour so swete a þing.
 Of men and wimmen þat beþ nouȝe, 1175
 þat gon and riden and spekeþ wiþ mouȝe,
 Beþ non so fair in hire gladnesse
 Als þai ware in hire sorewenesse.
 No man ne knewe hem þat hem was wo
 Bi semblaunt þat þai made þo, 1180
 But bi þe teres þat þai schedde,
 And fillen adoun bi here nebbe.
 þe Ameral was so wroþ and wod
 þat he ne miȝt wiþdraw his mod.
 He bad binde þe children faste; 1185
 Into þe fir he bad hem caste.

1159 hap: *MS.* had. 1165 folk: *MS.* fok. 1172 segge:
MS. sigge. 1173 For: *MS.* fo. 1176 first and: *MS.* anr.
 1181 schedde: *MS.* schadde, 1186 bad supplied.

pilke duk þat þe gold ryng hadde
 Nou to speke rewþe he hadde.
 Fain he wolde hem helpe to liue,
 And tolde hou þai for þe ring striue. 1190
 þe Ameral het hem azen clepe,
 For he wolde þo schildren speke.
 He askede Florice what he hete,
 And he told him swiþe skete.
 'Sire,' he saide, 'zif hit were þi wille, 1195
 þou ne auʒtest nowt þis maiden spille;
*Of al þis gilt ihc am to wite,
 Ihc oʒte deie and he go quite.*
 Ac, sire, let aquelle me,
 And lat þat maiden aliue be.' 1200
 Blaunche flour saide þo :
 'þe gilt is min of oure boþer wo.
*ʒef hit nere for mi luue,
 He nere noʒt fram his londe icome.'*
 And þe Ameral saide þo : 1205
 'Iwis, ʒe schulle die bo.
 Wiþ wreche ich wille me awreke;
 ʒe ne scholle neuere go ne speke.'
 His swerd he braid out of his sscheþe.
 þe children for to do to deþe, 1210
 And Blaunche flour pult forþ hire swire
 And Florice gan hire aʒein tire.
 'Ich am a man, ich schal go bifore.
 þou ne auʒtest nouʒt mi deþ acore.'
 Florice forht his swire bet 1215
 And Blaunche flour wiþdraweþ him ʒet.
*Neiþer ne miʒte þere þole
 þat þat oþer deide bifore.*

1188 speke: *MS.* spleke. 1197-8 *from C.* 1203-4 *from C.*
 1206 *MS.* sculle. 1208 *second ne: MS.* no. 1213 *bifore:*
MS. bifore. 1215 bet: *MS.* pulte, *C* bed. 1216 wiþdraweþ
 him ʒet: *MS.* aʒein hit brutte, *C* wiþdrawe him ʒet. 1217-18 *from*
C. 1218 *one þat supplied.*

Al þat iseȝen þis
 þerfore sori weren, iwis, 1220
 And saide, 'Dreri may we be
 Bi swiche children swich rewþe se'.

þameral, wroþ þai he were,
 Boþe him chaungede mod and chere,
 For aiþer for oþer wolde die, 1225
 And he segh so mani a weping eȝe,
 And for he hadde so mochel loued þe mai,
 Weping he turned his heued awai,
 And his swerd hit fil to grounde;
 He ne miȝte hit helde in þat stounde. 1230

þilke duk þat þe ring found
 Wiþ þameral spak and round,
 And ful wel þerwiþ he spedde;
 þe children þerwiþ fram deþe he redde.
 'Sire,' he saide, 'hit is litel pris 1235
 þise children to slen, iwis.

Hit is þe wel more worsschipe
 Florice conseile þat þou wite,
 Who him tawȝte þilke gin
 For to come þi tour wiþin, 1240
 And who þat him brouȝte þar;
 þe bet of oþer þou miȝt be war.'

*Alle þat herde wordes his
 Bisecheþ þat he graunti þis.*
 þan saide þameraile to Florice þo: 1245
 'Tel me who þe tauȝte her to.'

'þat' quaf Florice 'ne schal I neuere do,
 But ȝif hit ben forgiuen also
 þat þe gin me tauȝte þerto;
 Arst ne schal hit neuer be do.' 1250
 Alle þai praied þerfore, iwis;
 þe Ameral graunted þis.

1224 *MS.* chaungege. 1230 helde: *MS.* hlde. 1243-4 *from C.*
 1250 schal: *MS.* scha.

So eueri word Florice haþ him told
 Hou þe made was fram him sold,
 And hou he was of Speyne a kyngges sone, 1255
 For hire loue þider icome
 To fonden wiþ som gin
 þat faire maiden for to win,
 And hou þourgh his gold and his garsome
 þe porter was his man bicom, 1260
 And hou he was in þe coupe ibore;
 And alle þis oþer lowen þerfore.

Nou þe Amerail, wel him mote bitide,
 Florice he sette next his side,
 And made him stonde þer vpriȝt, 1265
 And haþ idubbed him to kniȝt,
 And bad he scholde wiþ him be
 Wiþ þe formast of his mene.
 Florice fallet to his fet
 And bit him ȝif him his lef so swet. 1270
 þe Ameral ȝaf him his lemman;
 Alle þe oþere him þanked þan.
 To one chirche he let hem bringge,
 And wedde here wiþ here owene ringge.
 Nou boþe þis children alle for bliss 1275
 Fil þe Amerales fet to kis;
 And þourgh conseil of Blaunche flour
 Clarice was fet down of þe tour,
 And þe Amerale here wedded to quene.
 þere was feste swiþe breme: 1280
 I ne can nowt tellen þe sonde,
 Ac neuer was richer feste in londe.

Nas hit nowt longe after þan
 þat Florice tidingge ne cam
 þat his fader þe kyng was ded; 1285
 And al þe barnage ȝaf him red

1259 garsome: *MS.* garisoun. 1273 he: *MS.* h. 1282 *MS.*
 Ac þe richest feste in londe, *T* But rycher feste was neuer in londe.

þat he scholde wenden hom
 And vnderfongen his kyndom.
 At þameral he nom his leue,
 And he him bad wiþ him bileue. 1290
 Þanne bispak þe Amerail,
 ' 3if þou wilt do, Florice, bi mi conseil,
 Dwelle here and wend nowt hom ;
 Ich wille þe 3iuen a kyngdom
 Also longe and also brode 1295
 Als euere 3it þi fader bod.'
 ' I nel bileue for no winne ;
 To bidde me hit were sinne.'
 Þai bitauzt þe Amerail oure Drizt,
 And þai com hom whan þai mizt, 1300
 And let croune him to king
 And hire to quene, þat swete þing,
 And vnderfeng Cristendom of prestes honde,
 And þonkede God of all his sonde.
 Nou ben þai boþe ded.
 Crist of heuene oure soules lede ! 1305
 Nou is þis tale browt to þende
 Of Florice and of his lemman hende,
 How after bale hem com bote ;
 So wil oure Louerd þat ous mote,
 Amen siggeþ also, 1310
 And ich schal helpe 3ou þerto.

E X P L I C I T

1289 þameral : *MS.* ameral.
 1307 lemman : *MS.* lemma.

1291. Amerail : *MS.* ameral.

NOTES

1 Probably not more than eighty lines of the beginning of the poem (corresponding to 192 lines of the French poem) are lost. The passage immediately preceding the beginning of our text described the bringing-up of the children together, sharing board and bed. See the summary of the story in the introduction, p. 8 f.

in londe: 'anywhere'. This tag, common in ME. texts, here represents a similarly conventional phrase in the French, *en nul terre*. Medieval English romances had a great stock of such phrases, drawn from the various literary traditions which met and blended in England. Some of the tags of ME. romance are found in OE. verse, a few in Old Norse, others in French romance. For examples see notes to 107, 173, 206, 279, 381, 382, 436, 878, 932, 970, and 1306.

3 *Cristen woman*: Blauncheflour's captive mother.

5 *in feere*: 'together'. There was no use of OE. *gefēra* after a prep. corresponding to this phrase. Probably OE. *gefēra(n)* nom. 'as companion(s)', reduced in ME. to *ifere(n)*, was misunderstood as prep. + noun, and *i* was expanded to the accented form of the prep. *in*. Similarly OE. *geswōgen*, p.p. 'swooned', gives *on sowne* in line 252, through early ME. *iswoun*.

9 'That there would be much greater harm.'

11 *letters*: the term covers general education, in particular Latin.

14 'Now see that you do so diligently.'

21-2 *rede*: *seide*. *seide* (OE. *sægde*) is for *sede* (OE. *sæde*). But as *seide* may have been written conventionally even when the writer pronounced the word *sede*, the manuscript spelling has been left unaltered. Cf. lines 52, 92, 139 n., 215, 264, 440. The spelling *sede* occurs in ll. 595, 1125 (C).

23-4 *soon*: *loue*. Though the rhyme is bad, the text is probably correct. A similar assonance is found in 1203-4 (*luue*: *icome*), lines proved by the French original to be genuine in content at least. The last assonance is found also in *Jacob and Joseph* 378-9. There were not many words in ME. affording true rhymes with *loue*.

33 Latin, the universal language of scholars in the Middle Ages, for long remained the chief subject taught in schools, even to very young children.

33-4 The English romancer has retained the rhymes of the French

original, as also in 35-6, 57-8, 65-6 (note), 173-4 (note), 179-80, 217-18 (note), 265-6, 329-30, 451-2, 703-4 (note), 747-8, 901-2, 909-10 (note), 923-4, 937-8, 1029-30, 1075-6.

44 'How it would fare with Floris.'

46 *deed*: a variant (usually northern or north midland) of *deop* 'death'. The final *d* has not been satisfactorily explained: Scandinavian influence (suggested by *N. E. D.*) is out of the question, for the word was not pronounced with a final *d* in Old Danish (though spelled *død*) or in any other dialect of ON. We believe the true explanation to be found in the OE. idiom illustrated in *ealle ge þa to deaðan dædun* 'interficitis' Psalm lxi. 3; *ne do hy to deaðan* 'ne occideris eos' Psalm lviii. 10 (the Paris Psalter). In this idiom the adj. *dæad* was later taken to be a noun meaning 'death', the more readily as OE. *dēap* was used in similar expressions. The phrase *don to dede* is frequent in ME., e.g. *Guy of Warwick* 3591, *Ywain and Gawain* 714, *Sir Perceval* 930. Spellings and rhymes show the noun *deed* had the same vowel as the adj., that is, *ē*, except in those dialects in which *ē* became *ɛ̃* before dental consonants. In *Handlyng Synne* 9189-10 the noun and adj. actually rhyme together.

51 'Then may he marry according to our advice', i.e. marry a lady of his own rank.

56 *Florens*: this form occurs only in the Trentham MS. All forms of *Floris* ultimately derive from Latin *florens*, *n* being lost before *s* in popular and late Latin. Usually, however, *n* was retained in Latin spelling when no longer pronounced, and often also in OFr.

59-60 The text is unintelligible as it stands in the manuscript, and has been emended to accord with the sense of the French original. The corresponding passage in *Floire et Blanceflor* is (309 f.):

*Mais qui li porroit si tolir
Qu'ele n'en esteust morir,
C'ou m'est avis plus bel seroit.*

'But whoever could take her away so that she would not meet her death for this, this [course], in my opinion, would be more seemly.'

65-6 The rhyme-words in the French are *Floire*: *Montoire*. *Montoire* was in Andalusia, west of Almeria, where Floris' father ruled. Both Almeria and Andalusia were under Moslem rule when the French poem was composed.

69 *for whom* (manuscript *for whom*) is shown to be the right reading by the French (319) *Des qu'ele l'ocoison sara* 'when she knows the reason'.

73-4 'To cause their love to be so completely destroyed that it be as if it had never existed.'

76 *make hur seek*: 'pretend to be ill', a French idiom, which is used in the original not of the mother, but of the children's tutor (323):

malades se fera Gaidons. There it is clearly explained that the tutor feigns illness as an excuse for sending Floris to be taught elsewhere, and the mother as an excuse for keeping Blaunche flour at home.

105-6 *with: seith.* The rhyme shows that *seith* stands for *sīþ* (representing late Old Anglian *sīþ*, a variant of the more usual *sīhþ*), for in this text a long vowel often rhymes with a short of similar quality; cf. 19-20, 211-12, 273-4, 463-4, &c. The sense also is shown to be 'sees' by the French 367-8:

*Mais nul oïr ne nul veoir
Ne li puet faire joie avoir.*

'But nothing that he hears or sees can make him joyful.'

107 *game ne gle*: a very common tag in ME. texts. It goes back to OE. alliterative use; cf. *Beowulf* 3021, *gomen and gleodream*.

108 *lyf* is probably miscopied for *lef* 'dear one', but *lyf* was also used figuratively of the beloved; cf. *St. Katherine* 1531, *He is mi lif ant mi luue*; 2478, *Mi lif ant mi leofmon*; also Chaucer, *Franklin's Tale* 365, *his owene hertes lyf*.

115-16 'If any one spoke to him, love had pierced his heart.' No conversation could distract his mind.

118 Literally, 'As which nothing is so sweet'.

119 Sweets were comparatively rare and costly in the Middle Ages, and when likened to love bore no cloying or sentimental connotations, but suggested only value and pleasure. In a love-song in MS. Harley 2253 (ed. Bōddeker, p. 146) the lover compares his lady *Johon* (Joan) to liquorice, sugar, cinnamon, and ginger.

121 'Nor aught else nor any other flower.' The addition of *flour* for rhyme and sense was suggested by Kölbing (*Englische Studien*, 1886, p. 96). It is supported by the French, though the English poet has developed the original figure in a different way; cf. 372 f.:

*El cuer li a planté une ente
Qui en tous tans flourie estoit
Et tant doucement li flairoit
Que toute chose en oubliait.*

'In his heart [love] planted a flower which ever bloomed and so sweetly gave forth its scent that through it he forgot all things.'

123 'One day seems as long to him as three.'

131-2 'The chamberlain sent the king a written account to inform him of his son's condition.'

139-40 *sayde: mayde.* The original text probably had *sede: mede* or *sade: made*; see notes to 21 and 433.

140 'Let the maiden be brought forth'; *let* has the sense 'bid' and *do* 'cause to be done'.

147 *Babyloyn*: not the Babylon of Scripture, but old Cairo in Egypt, the ruins of which still bear the name Baboul.

163 *coupe*: in OFr. this was the technical term for a vessel fitted with a lid (*couerle* 169) and *hanap* for a vessel without a lid.

166 By *knaue* is meant 'unskilled or ignorant fellow'. The French romance says 'Vulcan made it'.

168 The reference is to the abduction of Helen by Paris, which led to the siege of Troy.

170 *her bother* (manuscript *both her*) *loue*; 'the love of them both' is the sense required, and in this text the gen. pl. of *both* is *bother*; cf. 956, 1148, 1166, 1202. The preceding word *þer* might perhaps be interpreted as 'their' and then *her* need not be supplied. But no such form occurs anywhere else in this text, in any of the manuscripts: *her(e)*, *hir(e)*, *hur* are the forms used.

172 f. The name 'carbuncle' in the Middle Ages was applied to various red-coloured stones such as the ruby as well as to the carbuncle proper. The carbuncle was widely believed to have the power of emitting light, and to be found in serpents' heads. It was obtained after charming the serpent with music; see Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, Book I. 463 f., and the Chaucerian *Romaunt of the Rose*, 1120 f.

173 *soler*: properly 'an upper chamber, garret', but confused with *seler* 'cellar' and frequently used to mean 'cellar', as in this passage, from the thirteenth century onwards. The French corresponding to 173-5 is (479 f.):

*N'est sous ciel si orbes celiers,
S'il i estoit, li boutilliers
Ne peust sans autre clarté
Cler vin connoistre d'ysopé.*

'Under heaven there is no cellar so dark, that the butler, if he were in it, could not without other light tell clear wine from hyssop.' The French tag *sous ciel* exemplified in this passage doubtless added to the currency of ME. *under heuen* descended from OE. *under heofenum*, used in same manner as *sous ciel*.

176 There are lines missing after this line, as there are elsewhere in the Trentham MS.; here, unfortunately, the Trentham MS. is the only authority for the text. The object made of 'silver and gold good and fine' was a figure of a bird on the lid of the cup, holding in its claw the carbuncle, as is described in the French (483-5):

*D'or avoit deseure un oisel,
A trifoire et a néel,
Qui en son pié tenoit la gême.*

180 *Lauine*: Hausknecht's correction of manuscript *leman*. Cf. the French (491-2):

*Si la dona, en Lombardie,
A Lavine qui fu s'amie.*

This is Lavinia, daughter of Latinus, whom Aeneas married in Italy.

183 In the French poem the merchants buy the cup from the thief. This is more natural.

185 *suche pree*: 'three times the amount'; the merchants in the French poem are more modest, expecting only double.

191 *Amyral*: 'Emir'. Arabic *amir* 'commander' occurs in many titles followed by *-al-* 'of the', as in *amir-al-bahr* 'commander of the sea', and in 'commander of the faithful', one of the titles of the caliph. *Amiral* was misunderstood by westerners to be a noun meaning 'ruler, commander'. Modern *admiral* (respelt after Latin *admirabilis*) is confined to the one sense 'commander of the sea'.

193 'They soon came to an agreement (about the price).'

206 *gold and garsome*: a common alliterative phrase in ME. It occurs again in 821 and 1259; also in *Lazamon's Brut* 885, 940, &c., and in other romances. The phrase is of Scandinavian origin; cf. ON. *gul lok gørsimar* in the *Lay of Insteinn* (stanza 16), in *Hálfssaga*, and in *Valundarkviða* (stanza 19). In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in ME. *garsom* was often replaced by the French word *garyson* which meant 'store, plenty'; it was substituted by the fourteenth-century copyist in this passage. The phrase occurs with *garyson* also in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* 1255, and elsewhere.

208 There is no mention of the cup here in the French text of Du Ménil (515-16), but there probably was in the French text used by the English romancer, as the other translations also make definite mention of the cup. The Icelandic (ed. Kölbing 20/5), for example, has *kaupmaðrinn fór heim ok fekk konungi fé þat er hann tók fyrir hana ok svá kerit* 'the merchant returned and brought the king the money that he had received for her and the cup as well'. So also the Middle Dutch of Diederik 850. The translations often agree in details against the preserved French text, being based on texts which were fuller. Sometimes these details may be additions to the original French poem, but more often are genuine matter which has fallen out of the French poem in the course of its transmission. Details in which the thirteenth-century translations (Diederik, Fleck, the original Norse translation, and the English poem) agree must have belonged to an early form of the poem, earlier than the oldest manuscript of the French text (second quarter of the thirteenth century). Cf. the notes to lines 218, 242, 392, 401, 515, 518, 550, 559, 637, 785, 941, 975, 998.

218 *þat* is probably nom. 'who loved Floris', as the other translations agree with this interpretation. Du Ménil's text of the French (651-2) has:

Ci gist la bele Blanceflor

A cui Floires ot grant amor

'whom Floris loved greatly', but in 706 (= 266 of the English) one manuscript has *qui envers Flore*.

226 *chargeþ*: the manuscript reading may perhaps be interpreted 'No kind of answer do they give', though this forces the sense of *chargeþ* 'take charge of'. The damaged Cotton Vitellius MS. has... *answere nou targeþ heo*, showing that the English romancer was following closely the French (671):

Ils se tardent de respons rendre.

'They are slow to give him answer.' *targeþ* of V seems to be right, and if it is accepted *nonskyns* is unintelligible. Probably the original had something like *Nou hym to answere targeþ hee*.

242-3 This statement does not appear in the text of the French poem edited by Du Ménil. But the Icelandic agrees in giving the mother's answer as *fyrir sjau nóttum* 'seven nights ago'. Thus the reading *seuenyzt* of V is better than *fourtenyzt* of A. See note to 208.

255-6 Swooning lovers were a commonplace of French romance and of the English adaptations, and descriptions of them were reduced to formulae. *Revis of Hampton* 1311-12 has almost the same words:

*When he awook and speke mizt,
Sore a (= he) wep and sore sizt.*

273 This line was rejected by Hausknecht as spurious, but without sufficient reason. The rhyme *meene: ken* is normal, as there are other instances in the poem of a short vowel rhyming with a long of similar quality (see note to 105). The south-eastern form *ken* is paralleled by *kesse* 542 (r.w. *hostesse*), *rene* 718 (r.w. *clene*), *begge* 1171 (r.w. **segge*; cf. 1121-2).

279 *Lytel and muche* renders *petit et grant* in the French original, which the Icelandic translator is probably right in interpreting as *hverr ungr ok gamall* 'every one young and old'. The phrase is then a variant of *yunge and olde*, an equally frequent paraphrase of 'every one' in ME.; cf. especially *Havelok* 30, *Him louede yung, him loueden olde*. Usually the phrase meant 'lowly and great' both in French and English. Cf. *La Vie de Saint Alexis* 184, *Trestuit l'onourent, li grant e li petit* 'Every one honours him, great and humble'; and in English, Chaucer's *Prologue to the C. T.* 494, *much and lite* 'great and humble', Myrc's *Instructions for Parish Priests* 1156 (in the same sense). It is worth noting that the phrase was used in OE. also as a paraphrase of the idea 'every, all', as in the verse translation of the metres of Boethius 26/36 *litlum and miclum gumenā gehwilcum*.

280 The French (739) shows that the reading of V is to be preferred to that of A:

*Petit et grant tous vous amoient
Por la bonté qu'en vous véoient.*

fayrhede was suggested by the French a few lines before (728):

*Nus hom ne porroit pas descire
Vostre biauté, ne bonté dire.*

'No man could describe your beauty, or tell of your goodness.'

290 If the manuscript reading *woldest* is kept, the line means 'And gladly would I die, if you were willing', which does not ring true, nor does it agree with the French (765):

*quant voel morir
Et jou t'apel, nel veus oïr.*

'When I wish to die and call upon you, you will not hear.' Hausknecht assumed that the original had *noldest* ('and you were not willing') which was altered by the copyist to avoid rhyming on the same word. The awkwardness of such a rhyme is avoided, and natural sense gained, by reading *woldest* in line 289 and *noldest* in line 290.

291 *me*: 'one', a weakened form of *men*, which is a weakening of *man* pron. 'one'. But *men* pron. is often indistinguishable from *men* n. pl. 'men' as in 465, &c.

341 *leue*: 'live', not 'believe'; cf. the French 881:

Quant il le sot, dit que vivra.

'When he knows this, he says that he will live.'

365-6 The *men* are men-at-arms, the *knaues* servants.

369 *wyssh*: for *wiss(e)*. ME. *sch* in some dialects (particularly in the north) came to be pronounced *ss*; the spellings *sh*, *ssh*, *sch* could then serve to express original *ss* as well as *ss* from *sch*. The spelling *wyssh* here is due to the copyist.

370 This was the typical Eastern disguise. The knights of Western romances usually chose disguise as palmers, e.g. Beves of Hamtoun and Sir Ysumbras both adopted this disguise to seek among the Saracens betrothed (Beves) and wife (Ysumbras).

381 This curiously marked horse is from the French original (965-6):

*d'une part estoist tous blans,
De l'autre, rouges comme sans.*

Such horses were common in the brightly coloured world of French romance; cf. *Partonopeus de Blois* 7709-10:

*un bon cheval blanc
Dont l'oreille a color de sanc.*

'A good white steed having one ear of the colour of blood.' In Chrestien de Troyes' *Eric et Enide* Enide has a palfrey of even more remarkably symmetrical marking than Floris' (5324 f.):

*Partie estoit par tel devise
Que tote ot blanche l'une joe,
Et l'autre noir come choe.
Antre deus avoit une ligne
Plus vert qu n'est fuelle de vingne,
Qui departoit le blanc del noir.*

'It was marked in such wise that one cheek was all white, while the other was raven black. Between the two colours there was a line,

greener than a grape-vine leaf, which separated the white from the black.' The steed *rouges comme sans* of the French romances appears elsewhere in ME., as in *Richard Coer de Lion* 306, 333:

on a stede rede as blode.

383 A full description is given in the French poem. Expressions of inability to describe are frequent in English romances, and no less frequent in French, whence the convention was derived; cf. 708 and note. Chaucer, among other ME. poets, often found this convention a convenience.

390 f. Medieval romances abound with magical rings, stones, and other talismans. Cf. *King Horn*, where Rymenhild gives Horn a ring that will protect him from wounds; in *Morien*, Lancelot has a ring which protects him from poisonous wounds; in *Richard Coer de Lion* 1635 f. we hear of two rings such that

*whoso has that on stone
Watyr ne schal him drenche none;
That other stone whosoo that bere
Fyr ne schal hym nevyr dere.*

Many of these magical rings are still in existence; see for instance the *Guide to Medieval Antiquities in the British Museum*, p. 151.

392-6 Comparing this passage with the French, we find a definite example of the variation in the French text which elsewhere has to be assumed; see note to 208. This information about the ring appears only in one of the French manuscripts, and is regarded by Du Ménil as a later addition to the poem.

395 *erli and late*: a tag in ME. romances meaning 'at any time'; cf. *Pearl* 392, *Assumption of Our Lady* 302. As is here illustrated, the phrase arose as a translation of OFr. *tost ou tard* (*Floire et Blanceflor* 1006).

401-2 There is nothing in Du Ménil's text of *Floire et Blanceflor* corresponding to these lines, but the Icelandic translation has *þau létu sem aldri mundu hann sjá stðan, ok um þat vðru þau sannspá* 'they declared that they would never see him again, and in this they prophesied truly'. There is a corresponding passage in the Dutch of Diederik also (1596 f.).

410 *ende*: manuscript *hende* 'hands' can hardly be right; if 'next him' were the sense the sg. *hand* would be required. *Nexte his ende* probably means that the host 'began the board' and Floris sat next to him.

411 *alprest*: this form arose from *alper* 'of all' with the ending of the following superlative added to it. A similar form *alderest* occurs in 627. These forms are probably not copyists' errors, but were in actual use. See *all* adj. in *N.E.D.*, sense D 3 c.

416 *þouzte anoper*: *anoper* has an adverbial function 'otherwise'.

The line may be rendered: 'But Floris' thoughts were otherwise occupied.'

433 *maden*: this appears to be a surviving south-eastern form; cf. *made* 1254. In an area as yet undefined in the south-east of England æ appeared as ā in ME.; hence *maden* was the regular development of OE. *mæden*, a late southern variant of *mæġden*.

436 *kaiser oper to king*: a very old alliterative phrase; cf. in OE. *Seafarer* 82, *ne cyningas ne caseras*. It is frequent in ME.; cf. *Havelok* 353, *Golagros and Gawain* 1120, and elsewhere.

453 The Cambridge MS. here has:

*Floriz geȝ to his rest;
On Blauncheſtur he þoȝte meſt.
Ac reſt ne miȝte he nabbe none
Fort þe dide ſlep him nome.*

This A and T compress into one line. The Cambridge reading is the best, but the whole passage is transferred from the account of the next stopping-place of Floris (at Bagdad). The French there (1268 f.) has:

*Lassés ſont, ſi ſe vont couchier.
Quant Floire dort, et ſes cuers veille,
O Blanceflor jue et conſeille;
Mais ſ'il dormi, ce fu petit.*

The last of the Cambridge lines is not represented in the French, but means 'until a dead sleep came upon him'.

461-4 The syntax is a little uncertain, but the text is supported by a similar reading in T. That 463 depends on *com* and not on *sonde* 'sending' is shown by the French (1191 f.):

*Car vis li eſt qu'en Paradis
L'a mis, quant il eſt el païs
On ſ'amie cuide trover.*

'For it seems to him that he has been brought to Paradise, when he is in the country where he will find his beloved.'

463 *þe lond*: in the French poem the place where he landed was *Baudas*, that is, Bagdad. Floris could hardly pass through Bagdad on his way to Cairo. The romancer's geography was confused.

481 *him*: dat. sg. neut. referring to the palace; 'there was none other like it'.

487-8 A stock category of foods in the romances; cf. *Sowdone of Babylon* 740, *fleſsh and fiſſhe, brede and wyn*, which are the victuals ordered by Charlemagne for his army. In this poem the same list is repeated at 575.

504 *merchaundise*: what he has come to buy, as contrasted with *catel*, the things in his possession, for which he cares nothing. The English romancer here anticipates Floris' reply in 589 f.; in the

French the host asks if he is troubled because of the large toll levied from merchants. Floris merely replies '*Jou pens tout el*'.

515-16 The Icelandic is nearer to the English than the French: *oker Flóres heyrði hennar getit, varð hann þá gláðr* 'and when Floris heard her spoken of, he was glad'. The French (1253) has *Floires est liés de la novele*.

518 Again the Icelandic, English, and other translations agree against Du Méril's text of the French poem, which merely has *un boin mantel*, mentioning neither the scarlet colour nor the fur.

519 *meniuer*: OFr. *menu vair*, AN. *meniuer*: *vair* was a fur lining of squirrel fur, variegated by the alternation of the fur of the grey back with that of the white belly. *menu vair* 'little vair' was a similar sort of lining made in smaller patterns, and not always from squirrel. Ermine and other costly furs were often used.

520 Manuscript *hostesse* is due to confusion with the first stopping-place. There is no hostess here in the French nor in the other manuscripts of the English poem.

527-58 The English romancer has simplified the narrative of the French version, and reduced two stopping-places of Floris to one. Up to 527 the details are from the first; from 527 they are from the second.

546 'Who would direct and advise him.'

550 *burgeis*: *porter* in C, as in 566. Hausknecht reads *bruggere*, which V has in 569. He regards *bruggere* as a rendering of the French *pontonier* and *burgeis* as a corruption of *bruggere*. This is ingenious, but probably incorrect. OFr. *pontonier* meant 'ferryman' or 'one who collected tolls from boats', whereas a *bruggere* was presumably a bridge-keeper. If he collected tolls they would be from those who used the bridge. *porter* of the Cambridge MS. seems to be right, although it does not agree with French, for the Icelandic translation has *þann er garðshlið gætir* 'him who guards the gate', and corresponding to 569 *þann er portit geymdi* (of similar sense); the Dutch translation (2053 f.) also agrees with the Cambridge reading *porter*. The English, Norse, and Dutch versions were evidently based on a French text in which *pontonier* had been corrupted to *portier*, and *porter* should be read in 550, 566, 569 for *burgeis*. *burgeis* in A is an anticipation of 595 where the porter is so described; his connexion with the bridge accounts for the reading *bruggere* in V.

550 *findest*: 'shalt find'. The present indicative in both Old and Middle English was commonly used to express the future.

559-60 There is nothing in Du Méril's French text corresponding to these lines, but there is in the Middle High German of Fleck (3644 f.):

*Do nam er daz vingerlin ze sich,
Da mit im vil wol gelanc,
Und sageite im des grozen danc.*

'Then he took the ring to him, wherewith great fortune came to him, and gave him hearty thanks.'

565 *icome* (MS. *inome*) was probably the original reading, since *inome* is used of travelling, but not of arriving. Further, *inome* is regularly used with the auxiliary *hap* rather than *is*, though it is found with *is* in 227 and 1001.

609 *iustening*: usually taken (as in *N. E. D.*) to be a form of *gestning* 'assembly' such as that mentioned in 466 f., and the word was so understood by the Cambridge copyist, who wrote *gestninge*. But the French (1568-9) has:

*Li amiraus en sa justice
Cent et cinquante rois a mise.*

'The emir has made subject to him 150 kings.' *iustening* seems to be formed from OFr. *juste* adj. 'just', and to mean 'administration, rule' like *justice* in the French text.

610 *oper half hondred*: 150, literally 'the second half hundred'. This was the regular way of expressing the fifties from 150 onwards in OE., and it was not infrequent in ME.

of riche kinge: the construction is confused, as *kinge* was originally gen. pl.; *of* was inserted when the gen. was no longer felt to be such. The *of* in this passage is found in all four manuscripts and is probably original; *kinge* is the reading of only A and V, but this is enough to establish it as the correct form, in view of the rhyme.

618 *dureþ*, the verb required to make the syntax intelligible, is found only in C. It is clearly the right reading, as is shown by the French (1571-2):

*Babiloine, si com jou pens,
Dure vint lines de tous sens.*

The reading of T in 617 *y wene* is nearer the French than A, but perhaps only by accident.

624 The reading *feire* is clearly right, being the same word as in the French (1581):

*A toutes est la foire plaine
En tous les jours de la semaine.*

'In all of them is there full market every day of the week.'

625 *Seue* (MS. *An*) *hondred*; cf. the French (1584):

plus de sept cens.

628 This reading, based on V *noide nouht duti þe amperur*, is nearer the French (1587 f.) than A:

*La plus foible ne la menor
Ne doute roi ne aumacor;
Néis l'empereres de Rome
Ni feroit vaillant une pome.*

'The weakest tower nor the least would not fear king nor duke; not

even the emperor of Rome could effect anything worth an apple against it.'

637 *An hondred*: adopted from T and V as the right reading, though the French (1597) has *Deus cens toises haute et cent lée*. The Icelandic and Dutch translations agree in giving one hundred for the height as well as width.

645-54 This passage condenses not very clearly or accurately a description in the French of a great pillar which held up the floors of the tower and acted as a water conduit (*F. et B.* 1626-42). There is no mention of a 'pipe of brass'; the pillar is of marble. A, which omits this description of the pillar, nevertheless refers to it later (1027). The *walle* of 645 is distinct from that of 697f.

657 The light came from a carbuncle. The Cambridge MS. has the following lines instead of 655-6:

*On þe tur anouenon
Is þe charbugleston
Þat ȝineþ leme day and niȝt,
Ne bi hit neure so derk niȝt.*

655-6, however, are genuine, and the Cambridge lines as well, at least in part, as the French (1607 f.) proves:

*Deseur siet par enchantement
Uns escarboucles qui resplent;
Assis i est par grant conseil;
Par nuit reluist comme soleil
Tout environ par la cité;
Par nuit obscure a tel clarté
Que il n'estuet a nul garçon
Porter lanterne ne brandon.*

'Above is set by enchantment a carbuncle which shines; it is set there with great cunning. By night it shines like the sun all about the city; in the dark night it has such brilliance that there is no need for any lad to carry lantern or torch.' The Cambridge lines seem somewhat corrupt; the passage can only be uncertainly reconstructed, in some such form as this:

655 a *On þe tur anouenon*
 b *Is þe charbugleston;*
655 *On þe pomel aboue þe led*
 He is iwrout wiþ so moch red
657 a *Þat he ȝineþ leme day and niȝt;*
 b *Ne bi hit neure so derk niȝt,*
657 *In þe bureȝ ne darf me berne*
 Neiþer torche ne lanterne.

662 *Four and twenty*: originally perhaps *seuen siþe twenty*; the French (1644) has *sept vint*.

672 'Unless he is a eunuch.'

685-6 *knaueþ* (MS. *he knaueþ*): the imperative gives better sense, and is parallel with the French (1721-2):

*Or devez del vergier oïr
Et por quoi les i fait venir.*

'But you must hear of the orchard, and why he makes them come to it.'

691 *merie* is supplied from C; T has *mony*. It is not certain which of them is right. The French (1728) has:

*sur chascun cretel
Divers de l'autre a un oisel,*

and a little farther on gives a catalogue of the kinds of birds. But there is also mention of the *dous cri* of the birds. They are artificial, made of copper gilt, and they sing when the wind blows.

foulen: gen. pl. weak declension; the ending was often extended in ME. to nouns not originally weak.

692 The line as it stands in the MS. is pointless; 691-2 in C are:

*So merie is þerinne þe fozeles song,
Þat ioie and blisse is eue among.*

697 f. This *welle* by which chastity is tested is one of the marks of Greek influence in the story. The well of the chastity test is found for example in the *Clitophon* and *Leucippe* of Achilles Tatius viii. 12 and 14. The woman swears that she is guiltless of unchastity, and her oath is written on a tablet and hung around her neck. She then enters the water, which is shallow. If her oath is true the water remains as usual; if false, it boils up and rises until it has covered the tablet around her neck. Philostratus (iii. 4) tells of a similar well in India, used for testing oaths of all kinds.

Hausknecht, in his note on these lines, quotes a passage from William of Tyre's *Itinéraire à Jerusalem et descriptions de la Terre Sainte*, telling of a fountain in Cairo where the Virgin Mary washed the clothes of the infant Christ, when they had fled into Egypt from Herod. The Saracens paid great respect to this fountain and often came to wash there. There was also a palm-tree bearing dates, which bent down to the Virgin when she desired to eat the dates. The Saracens cut down the tree, but it sprang back into its place, showing no trace of the axe-marks. It is possible that a vague tradition of this well and tree has been combined with the conventional Greek well of chastity.

700 *stremes come* would give better metre and is probably right; cf. T *stremes com*, C *strimes comeþ*.

701 Cf. Sindbad's Second Voyage in the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, where the ground is strewn with diamonds; also *Pearl* 81 f.

703-8 Cf. the French (1755 f.):

*Saffirs i a et calcidoines,
Boines jagonses et sardoines,
Rubis, et jaspes et cristaus,
Et topasses et boins esmaus,
Et autres que nomer ne sai.*

The list was still longer in the French text which the English romancer used, as his *jacinctes* and *onicle* are found in other translations.

705 *jacinctes*: OFr. *jacincte*, late Latin *iacint(h)us*, an alteration of Latin *hyacinthus*. Among the Ancients the name was given to a blue stone, probably the sapphire, whereas the modern jacinth is of reddish-orange colour. In the Middle Ages jacinth was still used of the sapphire colour (and probably of the stone); cf. Wyclif's Bible, *Exodus xxv. 4 Iasynct, that is silk of violet hue*.

708 See note to line 383.

709 *wale* (MS. *waie*): 'stream, spring'; a similar form is required by the rhyme in 646 and 651. It is from OE. *wælle* or *wælla*, Anglian side-forms of *welle*, *wella*, West Saxon *wiella*, *wiella*.

710 f. Medieval romances offer many variations of the 'chastity test', a favourite theme. Some of the tests are simply methods of putting temptation before a man, as in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and the related French romance *Le Chevalier de l'Épée*; more often the test depends on some article which is magically endowed with the power of showing unchastity. Usually this is a ring, as in *King Horn*, or a mantle, as in the fabliau of *Le Mantel Mautailié* (a story often repeated in French and English romance), or a horn, as in the twelfth-century *Lai du Corn* and several later romances. In *The History of Prince Zeyn Alasman* in the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments* is a mirror which clouds before the face of an unchaste woman. In Greek romances chastity tests are frequent; the test by the pipes of Pan in Achilles Tatius viii. 13 resembles the test by the horn. Another test is that of the sacred fire in Heliodorus x. 8. The test of the fountain is also of Greek origin; see note to 697.

729 *ferste*: cf. French (1823):

*Sor qui carra la flors premiere.
'On whom the first flower falls.'*

736 'And we continually expect to hear that Blancheflour has been chosen.' A bad line metrically; *alle wenep hit schal be Blauncheflour*, based on C, would be better.

739 *sone* is used elliptically for *sone as*. Cf. *Genesis and Exodus* 329:

*Sone ȝe it ȝorof hauen eten,
Al ȝe it sulen witen (= understand).*

754 'And ask what your trade is.' Cf. Chaucer, *Knight's Tale* 823, *But telleth me what mystiers men ye ben.*

764 *scheker*: chess, a favourite game in the Middle Ages throughout Europe. The game of chess, as distinct from the earlier game of 'tables', is of Eastern origin; the name chess is the plural of OFr. *eschec* from late Latin *scācus*, *scaccus*, borrowed from Persian (through Arabic) *shāh*. Checkmate is from Arabic *shāh māt* 'the king is dead'. *Pe scheker* is properly the chess-board.

769 *mitte* = *mid þe* 'with thee'; a pronoun following a preposition was often treated as an enclitic in ME., and the preposition was then given strong stress; hence *mitte* is a good rhyme with *slitte*.

781-4 These lines should probably be put after 786. In the French Floris is not advised to bring his cup until the third day, nor is he in the versions of T and C, which omit these lines altogether. But, even if misplaced, the first two are genuine, rendering the French (1904) *Mais vostre coupe retenez*. The second pair are an addition, repeating 373-4.

785 *hondred* of A and T is right, not the *forti* of C which Hausknecht adopts. The French has *quatre onces d'or*, but the Icelandic has *hundrað marka gulls* 'a hundred marks of gold'.

788 'Place no value on your money.'

799-800 *first: list*. The original form may have been *friste*, as Kölbing suggests (*Englische Studien*, 1886, p. 94), but such a rhyme as *first: liste* can be paralleled. Cf. *King Horn* 29-30, *beste: werste*.

800 *pou ne list*: as the Auchinleck MS. is usually dated c. 1330, this is the earliest recorded personal use of *list*; ordinarily *þe list* (impersonal) was used.

801-2 These lines should follow 792, as they do in the Cambridge MS., as is proved by comparison with the French.

809-10 Not in the French original, but required for clearness.

814 *bicome þi man*: in the feudal sense, binding himself to serve him faithfully.

834 'I am deservedly betrayed', i. e. owing to avarice.

847 'Floris sometimes spoke and sometimes wept.' *siȝte* 'sighed', the reading of C, instead of *spak*, is more natural.

863 *Clarice*: her name is not given yet in the French poem, nor in the Cambridge MS., which is right. The text might be corrected by reading here as in C *To anoper bour*, in 869 *O maiden*, in 879 *here*, and instead of lines 899-900:

Clarice hatte þat maide hende;

To Blaunchestures chaumbre heo gan wende.

But it is not an important detail of the narrative and involves a rather clumsy knitting of the text of C and A; the reading of A is accordingly allowed to stand.

868 *coppe*: this form should mean 'cup', but has been confused with *coupe* 'basket' and is used here as its equivalent.

878 *dēp*: *lyf* as in T is more logical. The sense is 'He didn't count his life worth a bean'. Such expressions of worthlessness are common in ME. texts, and are especially favoured by Chaucer. In the *Canterbury Tales* he has, among others, *not worth an oystre* (Prol. 182), *a bene* 9140 (*Merchant's Tale*), *a botel hay* 16963 (*Manciple's Prol.*). This kind of phrase is derived from French use. It is very common in French romances, e.g. Beroul's *Tristram* 780, *Vostre escondit n'i vaut un pois* 'Your excuse is not worth a pea'. This is the nearest parallel to the expression used here. The bean as a measure of worthlessness seems to belong specially to English use. These phrases were also used adverbially; for an example in the French *F. et B.* see note to 628. There is a good example in *Bertrand du Guesclin* 19453:

un grant bois en siant

Sans noise demener la montance d'un gant.

'Not to make more noise in sawing a log of wood than the worth of a glove.' Cf. Chaucer, *C. T.* 17204 (*Manciple's Tale*), *the mountans of a gnat*.

879 'Maidens came running to Clarice.' The infin. was regularly used after *come* where we now have the pres. participle. This was the OE. idiom also; cf. *Beowulf* 702, *Com on wanre nihte Scridan sceadugenga* 'In the dark night the walker in shadow came striding'.

881 'And asked what troubled her.'

883 *hire understod*: 'understood'. This reflexive use is paralleled elsewhere; the reflexive pronoun is not a dative, as might be expected, but accus. Cf. *An Old English Miscellany*, ed. Morris, 45/207:

Peter anon þerafter hyne understod

Hwat his louerd hedde iseyd.

884 The manuscript reading is unintelligible. *Blauncheflour* is gen. sg. without inflection expressed in writing because the next word began with *s*. The Auchinleck copyist, not noticing this, took *swete wist* as an epithet applied to her; cf. the epithets in 217, 241, 272, 509. What the sense must be is shown not only by the context, but by the French (2089) *Ce fu ses amis, bien le sot* 'It was her (*Blauncheflour's*) sweetheart, she knew well'.

893-4 The form of these lines is corrupt, as the rhyme is impossible. *fluste* is a weak pa. t. of *flyze* 'fly', and the *s* is an AN. spelling of the front *ʒ*-sound; *fluʒte* or *flizte* would hardly be rhymed with *wiste*. The reading of the Cambridge MS. is more likely to be right:

Per fliste ut a buterflyze,

Are ihc wiste, on min iʒe.

901 *leyende*: 'laughing', as is shown by comparison of 937 below with the French (2169) *en riant dist a Blanceflor*. Here the French has

doucement apele and corresponding to 923 *doucement reparole*. The English romancer characteristically reuses the expression where he can.

907 *auoy* (MS. *auob*): *þ* and *y* are very similar in many ME. manuscripts, and liable to be confused. The French has *avoi!* (2125). C and T alter to the native word *away!* also meaning 'alas!'

909-10 These lines render *F. et B.* 2129-30:

Damoisele qui a amor

Et joie en soi, doit avoir flor.

(Du Méril's punctuation is wrong; he makes these lines into a reply from Clarice.) The rhyme is either *amures: flures* or *amure: flure*. The form *flure* (sg.) would not be unnatural if it referred specially to the flower that Clarice spoke of.

919 *I* must be supplied as Floris is not the subject; cf. the French (2141) *Quant jou au bel Floire ai failli*.

932 *clepte and keste*: a very old alliterative phrase, and a very frequent one in ME. In OE. poetry it occurs in *Andreas* 1016, *Wanderer* 42.

933 *laste a mile*: i.e. the time required to walk a mile. It was common to estimate time in this way. Cf. *Havelok* 1830-1:

For he was ded on lesse hwile

þan men mouhte renne a mile.

Libeaus Desconnus 103 (Arthur had not sat) *The mountance of a myle*.

941-2 The Icelandic and Middle High German versions agree with the English and differ from the French of Du Méril's text. The Icelandic: *Víst væri sú góð vina þín, at þú gæfir hlutskipti af þessu blómi!* 'Truly she would be a good friend of yours to whom you gave a share in this flower!' and similarly Fleck, 5880 f. The French (2178 f.) has:

Moult esteroit vostre anemie

Qui vous en feroit departie.

'Any one who took [the flower] from you would be a great enemy to you.'

948-9 In the French of Du Méril's text there is no mention of king or emir, but the Icelandic has *okkarr liggir bani við, ef konungr verðr vitss* 'it will be the death of us, if the king finds out', and similarly the Dutch of Diederik 3085 f.

952 *fin amour*: a French phrase, preserving the French idiomatic use of *fin*; 'with words of sheer love'. The phrase is not taken from *F. et B.*, however, but was of common currency.

960 *þe courtyn roun*: this makes good sense and rhyme, but the original probably had *droȝ here selue aroum* 'took herself out of the

way'. C has *An hure self wende hem from*, V . . . *wende aroum*, T *And droȝ hem self al a room*.

970 *car foul cold*: a very old alliterative phrase; cf. *Beowulf* 2396, *cealdum cearsidum*.

972 Here the Cambridge MS. adds:

*Nu hi cluppeþ and cussep
And makeþ togadre muchel blisse;
If þer was aȝt bute custe
Swete Blauncheſtur hit wiſte.*

This seems to be a distant paraphrase of a conversation between the lovers ending with their embraces, which is recounted in the French poem. The first two lines correspond to 961-2 of the text here printed. If the Cambridge MS. is right, 961-2 as they stand in the Auchinleck MS. must be cancelled.

975-6 Cf. *F. et B.* 2235-6:

*Le cele vie lor durast,
Ja mais changier ne le rovaſt.*

'So long as this life might last they did not desire to change it.' From the similarity of *cele* 'this' and *cel* 'heaven' some corruption seems to have crept into the French text, as the Dutch translation also at this point describes their life as heaven.

980 f. In the French this information is given by the porter when describing the tower to Floris. The French (1677 f.), as well as the other manuscripts of the English poem, support the emendations of 981, 983, and 985:

*Trestoutes celes qui i ſont
Doi a doi ſon ſervice font:
Iceles doi que il eſlit
A ſon lever et a ſon lit
L'une ſert de l'eue doner
Et la touaile tant ſon per.*

'All those who are there perform their duties in pairs; the pair that he selects, at his rising and going to bed, one serves him by giving him water and her companion holds the towel.'

990 The construction is unnatural. Read, probably, *þei to* 'they two' for *þer to*.

998 This line has no equivalent in the French, but the Icelandic has *koma til konungs at gera sína þjónustu* 'come to the king to perform their service', and the German of Fleck similarly (6186 f.).

1019 *On þe morewe* = Fr. *a l'endemain*. See foot-note.

1027 *þiler*: the pillar in which the water ran, described 645-54.

1040 Spoken by the emir. 'Now she fears me too little'; i.e. in refusing to come, she is acting insolently.

1067 *of dawē don*: 'kill'. A commonly used phrase; cf. *Handlyng Synne* 1035, 1070, *Beves of Hamtoun* 348, 481, *Pearl* 282, &c.

1083 Cf. *Octavian Imperator* and the *Seven Sages*; in both these romances the emperor sends for his barons to hold trial of wife and son respectively.

1086 *cloþe*: used in the collective sense 'clothing'; cf. *The Orrmulum* 3208, *Hiss clap wass off ołfennness her*.

1089-90 are an addition to the poem, repeated from 1083-4.

1104 *allinge*: carelessly written in the manuscript, and misread by Hausknecht as *awinge*. The word intensifies *dere*: 'I bought her thus dearly indeed.'

1133 *seriauntes*: A *Sarazins*. The French has *serf*.

1179-80 'No man could tell by anything in their appearance that they were suffering.'

1186 Line 1189 shows that the manuscript reading is impossible. The French (2642) is *El fu les commande a jeter* 'Into the fire he commands them to be thrown.'

1188 'Now out of pity he wished to speak.'

1203-4 The French corresponding to these lines is (2674-6):

*'Sire,' fait el, 'jou sui s'amie
Et jou sui par foi l'oquison
Por quoi il monta el doignon.'*

'Sir,' she said, 'I am his love, and I am now the cause that he climbed into the tower.' See note to 23.

1215-16 *bet*: 'offers'. The reading of A here is corrupt; *brutte* might be a verb meaning 'break, bruise' (OE. *brȳtan*), but this sense is not suitable in the context. The emendations are based on C.

1242 'That you may take better precautions against others.'

1249-50 'Unless pardon is also granted to those who taught me the trick to accomplish this.'

1279 The French poem makes it clear that she was not to be killed at the end of the year according to the emir's usual practice.

1305 Sudden ejaculations concerning the souls of the audience, and having no relation whatever to the story, are common in romances; cf. *Beves of Hamtoun* 509-10:

*Forþ þai wente wiþ þat child—
Crist of heuene be us mild!*

Cf. also *Seven Sages* 1045-6, and many passages in *King Alysaunder* 1439-40, 2045-6, &c.; also *King Horn* (Harley MS.) 1643-4:

*Nou hue beoþ boþe dede—
Crist to heuene vs lede!*

But the Laud MS. has *hem* instead of *vs*, and may be right.

1308 *bale and bote* is a very old alliterative phrase in English and Norse. Cf. *The Owl and the Nightingale* 687-8 ;

Hwon þe bale is alre hecst

Þonne is þe bote alre necst.

This proverb is of Scandinavian origin ; cf. Icelandic *þá er bótin næst, er bót er hæst* ' Then boot is nighest, when bale is highest ' (*Heilagra manna sögur* I, p. 445). Examples of the combination in OE. are : *Beowulf* 281, *bealuwa bisigu bot eft cuman* ; *Exodus* 5, *æfter bealoside bote lifes*.

NOTE ON THE LANGUAGE

Dialect. The scarcity of reliable evidence makes it difficult to estimate precisely what was the dialect of the original version. The rhymes show alternation between midland and southern forms, and some of the southern forms are south-eastern. It is probable, then, that the poem was composed in a dialect of the south-east midlands. The following characteristics may be noted:

(1) OE. *ald*: in late Anglian dialects *āld*, giving ME. *ȝld* in the midlands; in the south fractured OE. *ēald* gives ME. *ēld*. Both types occur in this poem:

(a) *bihelde* 300, r. *elde*.

(b) *biholde* 870, 892, r. *wolde*; *wolde* 207, r.w. *golde*.

(2) OE. *ea* usually appears as *a*, but once as *e* in *helue* 557 (r. *miselue*), a characteristically south-eastern form.

(3) The mutation of OE. *ea* before *l* + cons. was *æ* in Anglian, giving *a* in ME.; hence *walle* 'fountain', 645 (r. *wiþalle*) and elsewhere, is midland.

(4) *æg* before *d* or *n* in late southern OE. became *æ̆*, appearing as *ē* in the original form of this text: *seide* 22 (for *sede*, see note), r. *rede*.

(5) *ē* in midland dialects before front *ɶ* + vowel was raised to *ī*, occurring in *dyȝe* 260, r. *hyȝe* 'haste'; the southern development *eī* appears in *eye* 1058, r. *laie* (cf. the rhyme with *die* 1225).

(6) OE. *ȝ* normally appeared as *ī* in the midlands and as *ē* in the south-east; in the south-east midlands both as *ī* and *ē*. Both types occur in this poem:

(a) *y* > *i*: **pytte* 25 (OE. *pytt*), r. *wytte* (OE. *witt*); *triste* 888, r. *wiste*; *kisse* 961, r. *blisse*; *pinkeþ* 426, r. *drinkeþ*; *fille* 852, r. *wille*.

ȝ > *ī*: *prid* 640, r. *wid*; *lite* 904, r. *like*.

(b) $y > e$: see note to 273.

y lengthened in an open syllable $> \bar{e}$: *rene* 718, r. *clene*.

(7) The development of OE. $\tilde{a}$ cannot be tested with any accuracy, as the poet did not always distinguish $\tilde{e}$ from $\bar{e}$, as *þeme* 422, r. *dreme*; *swete* 433, r. *biþete*. Similarly he fails to distinguish $\bar{o}$ and $\bar{q}$; *nome*, note to 453, r. *none*; *wisdom* 696, r. *ston*; *kyndom* 1288, r. *hom*.

(8) Verbal inflexions, in so far as they are dialectal, belong to the south and south-midlands, namely, the contracted form of the 3rd pers. sg. pres. indic.; while the pres. part. in *-ing* in a poem of this date (c. 1225-50) points to the east-midlands. See under *Grammar*.

(9) A few isolated forms are dialectal: *seip* 106 (for *sīþ*, see note) is midland; *farwe* 299, 1169 is most frequent in east-midland texts, though also found in southern dialects.

If, then, the original dialect of the poem was south-east midland, some of the original south-eastern forms have been preserved by the Auchinleck copyist (though they were foreign to his own dialect). Such are:

(OE. $\tilde{a} > \bar{a}$) *maden* 433, *madenes* 899, *made* 1254. See note to 433.

(OE. $\tilde{y} > \bar{e}$) *trest* 824, *keste* 'kissed' 932, *manken* 1141, *gelt* 1148, *bleþelich(e)* 458, 803.

The Character of the Four Copies.

As portions of the text are taken from each of the four manuscripts, a brief characterization of their language and spelling may help to make their varying forms more readily intelligible.

The Auchinleck MS. was written in the north-west midlands; forms due probably to the western dialect of the copyist are these (in which OE. $\tilde{y}$ appears as *u*): *fulle* 444, *cussing* 933, *ibult* 1095, *ifult* 1096, *fur* 1132, 1164; north-midland or northern are: *an* 664, *anan* 1023; *leizande* 923.

In this copyist's language final unaccented *-e* is already dropping, e.g., in the infin. *ared* 1155, *þif* 942; in the subj. *þif* 857, &c.

The following peculiarities of spelling may be noted :

(1) *ȝ* is used to represent five sounds :

(a) At the beginning of words and syllables, approximately the sound of modern *y* in *you*. It is derived from OE. front spirantal *g*, as in *ȝiuen* 803, *vnderȝat* 419.

(b) Medially and finally after a front vowel, the voiceless equivalent of the preceding sound, like *ch* in German *ich*—*heȝe* 637, *miȝte*.

(c) Medially (chiefly in the combination *ȝt*) after a back vowel a voiceless back spirant with lip rounding, as in *bowȝt* 431.

(d) *ȝh* in *ȝhe* 'she' probably represents *h* followed by the sound of *ȝ* in (a).

(e) As interchangeable with *ȝ*, representing the same sound. In this edition *ȝ* in this use has been altered to *ȝ*.

(2) The copyist is uncertain in his representation of *ȝ* in (b) and (c), *b*, *ch*, *sch* :

(a) Variants of *ȝ* are *gȝ*, *ȝh*, *ghȝ*, or it may be omitted : *heghȝ* 563, *heȝhe* 469, *negȝ* 564, *nowt* 383, &c.

(b) Variants of *ȝ* are *th*, *ht*, and *ȝ* : *worht* 741, &c. See (e) of the preceding paragraph.

(c) Variants of *ch* are *hc* and *sch* : *ihc* 1156, *scheker* 764, *schere* 531, &c.

(d) Variants of *sch* are *ssch*, *ssc* : *fissc* 487, *sschrichen* 896.

These are the sounds that Anglo-Norman copyists found difficult to represent accurately, and except that (b) is northern and *sch* for *ch* possibly north-west midland these variants illustrate the influence of Anglo-Norman education on ME. spelling.

(3) A superfluous *h* is sometimes put at the beginning of words before a vowel, but such spellings in this edition have been removed to the foot-notes ; see 527, 585, &c. Conversely, organic initial *h* is sometimes omitted, as in *adden* 632. This uncertainty in the treatment of *h* was also characteristic of Anglo-Norman spelling of English.

(4) *ou* is used not only for long *u*, as was usual in ME. after about 1275, but also for short *u*, *pous carfoul* 580, &c.

The language of the Trentham copyist is of the fifteenth century, and midland, of a district farther north than the original dialect of the poem. The chief differences from the language of A are due to its later date.

The ending *-es* for the 3rd pers. sg. pres. indic. is used (*lernes* 113) as well as *-(e)þ*. Final unaccented *-e* is dropped in most inflexions. Vowels are frequently doubled to indicate length; thus *þeef* 184 = *þēf*, *goon* 19 = *gōn*.

As the spelling is nearer than in any of the other manuscripts to that of modern times, it needs little explanation.

The dialect of the copyist of the Cotton Vitellius MS. was south-western. Characteristic are:

(1) The voicing of initial *f* to *v*: *vor* 275.

(2) The appearance of OE. *ēo* as *u*: *bup* 295.

(3) The appearance of OE. *y* as *u*: *ichulle* 302.

This manuscript is early enough for long *u* to be spelled *u*, not *ou* as in A and T: *cuþest* 277.

The dialect of the Cambridge copyist was also south-western. These characteristics may be noted:

(1) In West Saxon the mutation of *eo* was *ie* (later *y*) appearing in ME. as *u*: *vrneþ* 647. The form in A is *erne*.

(2) *æg* became *æ* in West Saxon before *d* or *n*, appearing in ME. as *e*: *sede* 595. This word is spelled *seide* in A.

(3) OE. *ēo* appears as *eo* (either [ē] or [ō] in sound): *beoþ* 725, *beo* 776, *iseo* 789.

(4) OE. *y* appears as *u*: *dude* 402, *wule* 775, *guld* 1139. In A and T the normal development is *i* (*y*).

(5) The ending of the pl. of verbs is regularly *-eþ*: *vrneþ* 650. In A and T *-e(n)* predominates.

(6) Long *u* is spelled *u*: *murninge* 496, *fus* 792.

Grammar.

Nouns. The gen. sg. and all cases of the pl. of nearly all nouns ended in *-(e)s*, and the dat. sg. usually in *-e*. Examples: gen. sg. *maydens* 76, *Goddess* 316; pl. *arsouns* 385, *maidenes* (gen.) 662, 991, *teres* (dat.) 1181; dat. sg. *lore* 109, *liue* 1082.

fader 221 is descended from the uninflected gen. form in OE. (*fæder*). On *Blaunche flour* 884 see note. *þing* 472, 1127 is a survival of the OE. uninflected pl. of neuter long stems.

When preceded by a numeral, nouns show considerable fluctuation between the nom. pl. inflexion *-(e)s* and the old gen. pl. *-e* (OE. *-a*): *sithes* 530, *toures* 625, *taises* 639, and others, but *schillinge* 540, *zate* 620, *sipe* 620, *boure* 662, *mark[e]* 770, *kinge* 610 (see note).

The ending of the OE. weak gen. pl. (*-ena*) appears in *foulen* 691. The weak pl. ending *-(e)n* (OE. nom. acc. *-(a)n*) is found in *milen* 618, *taisen* 637, *coupen* 852, *fon* 1116. Only the last two of these words were weak in OE.

The ending of the OE. dat. pl. *-um* appears as *-e* in *lyfdawe* 48, *dawe* 1067.

Adjectives. The pl. and weak form (used after the definite article, demonstrative pronoun, or possessive pronoun, and in the vocative case) ended in *-e*. This inflexion is not very accurately preserved by the copyists. Examples: pl. *alle*, *al[le]*, 413, 414, 1169, 1219; weak, *faire* 379, *leue* 355, 512, 743, *gode*, 782.

Pronouns. FIRST PERSON: *ich*, *ihc* are the strongly accented, *I*, *y* the weakly accented forms of OE. *ic*.

SECOND PERSON: Sg. *pou* (nom.), *þe* (accus. and dat.).

Pl. *þe* (nom.), *þou* (accus. and dat.).

The polite use of the pl. for the sg. did not become common in English until the following (fourteenth) century.

THIRD PERSON: fem. There is a great variety of forms for the fem. nom., *he*, *heo*, *hi(i)*, *þhe*, *s(c)he*. Rhymes point to a form with the vowel *ē*, doubtless *hē* or *þhē*; see 238, 427, 875. The fem. accus., dat. and gen. is *hire*, *here*. Neuter: the nom. and accus. is *(h)it*, the dat. *him* 481 note, though it is possible that *him* is masc. in accordance with grammatical gender.

Pl.: nom. *he(e)* 226, *hi* (OE. *hēo*, *hī*), but usually *þai*, *þei*, *bey* (ON. *þeir*);

accus. and dat. *hem* (OE. *heom*);

gen. *her(e)*, *hir(e)*, *hur* (OE. *heora*, *hiera*).

The use of the pronouns of the third person shows some traces of grammatical gender. Thus the tower (OE. *tūr*, m.) is referred to as *he* 637, 639; the well (OE. *wælla* m., *wælle* f.) is *he* in 647 but *hit* in 646; the cup (OFr. *coupe* f.) is *hire* (accus.) 792; the basket (*þe coupe*) in 868 in C is *hire* (accus.), but in A this is altered to *þe coppe*.

DEMONSTRATIVE: Sg. *his*, 445, &c. Pl. *þese*, *his(e)*, 187, 1135, 1168.

Sg. nom. *þat* 241, &c.; accus. and dat. *þan*. Pl. *þo*, 1120.

RELATIVE: *þat* 'who, which, that'.

Verbs. The endings of the strong and weak verbs are:

INFINITIVE. The usual ending is *-e*: *rede* 21, *swage* 38, *do* 64, &c. The ending *-(e)n* does not occur in rhyme, but was doubtless used. In *comen* 629, *helden* 841, &c. the metre is smoother if the endings are taken as genuine.

INDICATIVE, PRESENT.

Sg. 1 *-e*: *meene* 273.

2 *-(e)st*: *stikest* 296, *lest* 789.

3 *-(e)þ*, and many contracted forms in *-t*: *geþ* 607, 837, *arist* 1019, *bet* 1215.(C).

Pl. *-e* is proved by rhyme: *belete* 201, *bede* 975, *bringe* *1133, **kisse* note to 972 (if genuine); *-en* or *-eþ* (or both, as in 1176) may also have been used.

INDICATIVE, PAST. Strong verbs sg. 1 and 3 no ending: *sat* 420, *tobrake* 133; sg. 2 *-e* (and the same stem vowel as pl.): *speke* 448. Pl. *-e*: *ete* 412, 492; probably also *-en*, as in *founden* 460. In 111-12 *grom*:*coom* should be *gromen*:*comen*.

Weak verbs sg. 1 and 3 *-e*: *seide* 22, 41, &c.; sg. 2 *-est*: *cupest* 277. Pl. *e(n)*: *leyde* 339, *loueden* 279.

SUBJUNCTIVE, PRESENT AND PAST. Sg. *-e*: *recche* 298, *come* 293, *radde* 546. Pl. not recorded.

IMPERATIVE: Sg. no ending or *-e*: *nim* 749, *bihold* 751, *wende* 747, *leue* 772. Pl. *-eþ* or *-e*: *siggeþ* 1310, *awreke* 1116.

PRESENT PARTICIPLE. The ending *-ynge* is proved by rhyme: *wepynge(e)* 313, 947, 1134, *hond-habbing* 1128. Probably *-ende* was also used as in *leyende* 901, *comende* 999, &c. *leizande* 923 is due to the north-midland dialect of the A copyist.

PAST PARTICIPLE. The *-n* of the ending has usually been dropped: *goo* 31, *graue* 165, *do* 686, &c. Forms with *-en* occur, as *smeten* 307, but are not established by rhyme. The prefix *i-*, *y-* is frequent in the pp. of both strong and weak verbs, and was probably still more frequent in the original form of the poem: *icome* 565, [*i*]brouȝt 48, &c.

The OE. strong conjugations are well preserved, when phonetic change is allowed for. Some verbs, however, have been altered by the force of analogies. Thus *steið* 1051 does not represent OE. *stāh*, but **stēah* formed on the analogy of *seið* 1052, &c. 'saw' from **sēah*, which has its long vowel (cf. OE. *seah*) from analogy with the second conjugation (e.g. *tēah*, pa. t.). In *jeef* 184 the long vowel of the pa. t. pl. (OE. *gēfon*) has been levelled into the sg. *bede* 'offer' and *bidde* 'ask, pray' have been confused (see Glossary); these verbs had begun to be confused already in late OE.

Of the weak verbs those of the first conjugation regularly shorten a long vowel in the pa. t. and pp., as *lad* 526, pp. of *lēde*, *radde* 546, pa. subj. of *rēde*. Verbs of the OE. *nerian* and *lufian* types usually do not preserve the -i- of the present stem, but *derie* 394, *þolie* 838, 1078, 1140 (cf. *þole* 1217), *handli* 892.

Metre.

Floris and Blaunche flour is composed in short rhymed couplets; the normal line contains four stresses:

387 *Bigón abóuten wþ orfréis.*

The number of syllables in the line varies; compare

17 *Al wépyng séide hé*

446 *Bóþe þe góld and þe wín*

with such lines as

634 *As fram þe hēuene hēð þe sōnne and mōne*

1227 *And for he hādde so móchel lóued þe mái.*

Thus it is seen that the unaccented element between the stresses may be reduced to a mere metrical pause (in 17 between *al* and *wépyng*, in 446 between *gold* and *and*), or may consist of as many as three syllables.

A few lines have only three stresses, as

111 *Bóþ máydons and gróm*

649 *Fram flóre into flóre.*

Also 427, 520, 650-2, 654, 825, 970, &c. Such lines are usually corrupt; thus

427 *To Flórice þán spak þhé*

and

970 *Of máni a cār foul cold*

can be corrected from the text of C :

427 '*Flóriz*,' *heo séde*, '*what máy þe blo*'

970 *Of hère sóreþe and cære cold.*

Others, such as 649-53 and 654, occur only in one manuscript, but the corruption is no less certain.

In this edition no attempt has been made to correct the metre, though the existing texts of the poem must be much rougher in rhythm than the original; but we have only a vague notion of what was regarded as correct metre by the Middle English poet, and extensive restoration of his verse would be very hazardous. There are some corrections which might be made with confidence, such as :

Final unaccented *-e* should sometimes be restored, as in *þouȝt*[*e*] 53, *swyþ*[*e*] 80, &c.

Read *al*[*le*] in 413, 414, 1219; [*y*]*brouȝt* in 48; [*And*] *þat* in 611 (following T); *mile and tene* in 618 (as in T). 700 and 736 see notes; in 746 read *Oþer reed ne can y noon* (as in T); for 839-40 read as in C :

Noȝt for þan while ihc mai go

I ne schall þe failli neure mo.

The text has probably been corrupted in numerous details such as these.

It is to be noted that final unaccented *-e* is usually elided before a word beginning with a vowel or *h*, though not invariably: 120 *as hur loue is*, but not in 17 *al weþyng seide he* and elsewhere.

The negative particle *ne* is often not pronounced as a separate syllable, but is a mere *n*' pronounced with a preceding vowel, as in 452 :

Þat I ne schal here seche at Babiloine.

GLOSSARY

THE glossary includes the words with which the average reader is not likely to be familiar, with references to lines in which the words occur. Such words as may easily be recognized and have suffered no change of meaning in modern times have been omitted. Words differing only slightly in meaning from their modern use have often been included, as otherwise the full significance of many passages might be missed. Generally speaking, the primary meaning of the word is given first, and the meanings required for this text follow. The derivation of each word has been added, when it is known.

Arrangement. *ȝ* has a separate alphabetical place following *g*; words beginning with *j* are listed under *i*, since initial *j* is often represented as *i* in the MSS.; *þ*, *th* follows *t*; *u* and *v* are listed together, since initial *u* is invariably spelled *v* in the MSS.; *y* initially has its ordinary place, but medially or finally will be found in the alphabetical position of *i*.

ABBREVIATIONS

AN.	Anglo-Norman.
from	is prefixed to etymologies when the word illustrated has additional suffixes, &c., not present in the etymon.
infl.	influenced.
ME.	Middle English.
MDu.	Middle Dutch.
N.E.D.	The Oxford (New) English Dictionary.
ODan.	Old Danish.
OE.	Old English.
OFr.	Old French.
ON.	Old Norse, especially Old Icelandic.
ONFr.	Northern dialects of Old French.
prec.	preceding word.
*	is prefixed to forms which are theoretically reconstructed.
+	between elements indicates that the compound is first recorded in ME.

A

ac(c), *conj.* but, 416, 861. [OE. *ac*.]
 acore, *v.* taste; suffer, 1214. [OE. **ācorian*.]
 ac(o)upement, *n.* accusation, 1124, 1130. [OFr. *acouplement*.]
 adden, *pa. t. pl.* had, 632. [OE. *habban*.]

adrad, *pp.* frightened, 895. [OE. *ā-drædan*.]
 afonge, *v.* accept, 815. [OE. *āfōn*.]
 after, *prep.* after, for, 2; according to, 40. [OE. *æfter*.]
 ago. See GON.
 agrise, *v. impers.* terrify, 1026. [OE. *āgrisan*.]

allegge, *v.* plead (in defence), 1122. [AN. *allegger.*]
 allinge, *adv.* wholly; indeed, 1104. [OE. *allunga.*]
 als, *adv.* as, 750. [OE. *alswā.*]
 alþer, *adj. gen. pl.* of all, 491, 611; alþrest, 411 note; alderest, 627. [OE. *alra.*]
 amy, *n.* loved one, 180. [OFr. *ami.*]
 amyra(i)l, amera(i)l, *n.* emir, 191 note, 681, 912, 1223, 1291.
 amorewe(n) = *on morewe(n)*, in the morning, 454, 988. See MORWEN.
 amoure, *n.* love, 35; *par am(o)ure(s)*, with (sincere) love, 218, 909. [OFr. *amour.*]
 an, *num.* one, 664. See OO.
 an, *conj.* and, 160, 467. [OE. *and.*]
 anoon, *adv.* straightway, 194. [OE. *onān.*]
 ano(o)nryȝt, *adv.* at once, 222, 883. [Prec. + OE. *riht.*]
 anond, *prep.* alongside, 862. [Cf. OE. *on emn.*]
 anoþer, *adj.* another; *adv.* otherwise, 416 note. [OE. *ān oþer.*]
 anouenon, *adv.* above, note to 657. [OE. *on ufan + on.*]
 aplȝt, *adv.* in truth, 89, 1101. [OE. *on + pliht.*]
 aplȝte, *v.* assure, 636. [OE. *ā- + plih-tan*, or from prec.]
 aquelle. See QUELLE.
 ar, *adv.* before, 1037; *arst*, sooner, 1250. [OE. *ær, ar.*]
 arauȝt, *pa. t.* gave, handed, 1157. [OE. *āræcan.*]
 arede, *v.* save, 826 (by a plan), 1155. [OE. *āhreddan*, infl. by *ārædan.*]
 arist, *pres. 3 sg.* arises, 1019. [OE. *arisan.*]
 arsouns, *n. pl.* saddle-bows, 385. [OFr. *arcon.*]
 assoine, *v.* excuse, 451. [OFr. *essoi(g)-nier.*]
 ate = *at þe*, 550, 551.
 atholde, *v.* retain, 782. [OE. *æthaldan.*]

atwite, *v.* reproach, 914; atwist, *pp.* 1020. [OE. *ætwtitan.*]
 atwo(o), *adv.* asunder, apart, 30, 972. [OE. *on twā.*]
 auȝt(e), *pa. t.* ought, 55, 1017. [OE. *āgan.*]
 auoy, *interj.* alas! 907. [OFr. *avoi.*]
 awinne, *v.* win, 548. [OE. *āwinnan.*]
 awreken, *v.* avenge, 1084, 1116, 1207. [OE. *āwrecan.*]

B

bad. See BYDDEN.
 bale, *n.* trouble, harm, 1308. [OE. *bealu.*]
 barbican, *n.* double tower over a gate, 676. [OFr. *barbacane.*]
 bede, *v.* command, offer, 801; bet, *pres. 3 sg.* *1215; bod, *pa. t.* 1296; ibede, *pp.* 859. [OE. *bēodan.*] See BYDDEN.
 begge, bygge, bye, *v.* buy, 148, 157, 431, 1171. [OE. *bycgan.*]
 beȝgh. See BOWE.
 belami, *n.* good friend (ironically), 1073. [OFr. *bel ami.*]
 belete, *v.* leave, 201. [OE. *be + lētan.*]
 ben, bep, beop, bup, *pres. pl.* are, 80, 295, 406, 725. [OE. *bēop.*]
 benisoun, *n.* blessing, 1010. [OFr. *beneison.*]
 bere, *n.*¹ outcry, 882. [OE. *gebære.*]
 bere, *n.*² bier, 400. [OE. *bēr.*]
 bere, *pa. t. pl.* carried, 855. [OE. *bæron*, *pa. t. pl.*]
 bet, *adv. compar.* better, 1242. [OE. *bet.*]
 bet, betauȝt. See BEDE, BITAUȝT.
 bi, *v.* be, 1072. [OE. *bēon.*]
 bydden, *v.* ask, pray, 350; bit, *pres. 3 sg.* 1018; bad, *pa. t. sg.* 1009; bede, *pl.* 975. [OE. *biddan.*] See BEDE.
 bydene, *adv.* forthwith, 60. See N.E.D.
 byforn, *prep.* before, 251. [OE. *beforan.*]
 bygge, bye. See BEGGE.
 bigon, *pp.* adorned, trimmed, 387. [OE. *begān.*]

byȝete, *n.* profit, 202, 434. [From OE. *beȝetan*, v.]
 biheld, biholde, *v.* behold, look, 300, 760, 870; bihalt, *pres.* 3 *sg.* 605. [OE. *behēaldan*, *behāldan*.]
 bileue, *v.* forsake, be parted from, 301. [OE. *belēfan*.]
 byleue, *v.* remain, 348. [OE. *belīfan*, confused with *prec.* in ME.]
 biment, *pa. t.* lamented, 512. [OE. *bemēnan*.]
 birede, *pp.* advised; *nowt ariȝt* b., mistaken, 860. [OE. *berēdan*.]
 bit. See BYDDEN.
 bitawt, be-, bitauȝt, *pa. t.* gave, committed to, 98, 1158; *pp.* 572. [OE. *betēcan*.]
 biȝute, *prep.* without, 1130 (C). [OE. *wipūtan*, *infl.* by *bi*.]
 biwraie, biwreie, *v.* betray, 948, 949. [OE. *bi- + wrēgan*.]
 blepelyche, *adv.* gladly, 148, 458. [OE. *blīpelice* (stem a variant of next).]
 blythe, *adj.* glad, happy, 67. [OE. *blīpe*.]
 bo, *adj.* both, 1206. [OE. *bā*.]
 bod. See BEDE.
 bonte, *n.* goodness, 280. [OFr. *bonté*.]
 borewe, bourh, *n.* town, 626, 635. [OE. *burh*.]
 bote, *n.* relief, 1308. [OE. *bōt*.]
 botelere, *n.* butler, 174. [OFr. *boteil-
k(er)*.]
 boterfleȝe, *n.* butterfly, 894. [OE. *buterflēge*.]
 boȝer, *adj. gen. pl.* of (them, you) both, *170, 956, 1148. [ON. *bádra*, *gen. pl.*]
 bour, *n.* private room, *esp.* room reserved for ladies, 272, 510. [OE. *būr*.]
 bourh, 636. See BOREWE.
 bowe, *v.* stoop, 711; beȝgh, *pa. t.* 1161. [OE. *būgan*.]
 bowȝt. See BEGGE.
 braid(e), *pa. t.* pulled, drew, 305, 1209. [OE. *brēgdan*.]

brech, *n. pl.* breeches, 670. [OE. *brēc*, *pl.*]
 breme, *adj.* brave; magnificent, 1280. [OE. *brēme*.]
 brenne, *v.* burn, 393, 1132. [ON. *brenna*.]
 brigge, *n.* bridge, 549. [OE. *brycg*.]
 brouȝt, *pp.* brought, 48. [OE. *bringan*.]
 burgays, b(o)urgeis(e), *n.* citizen, freeman of a city, 155, 205, 497, 595. [OFr. *burgeis*.]
 but, *conj.* unless, 742. [OE. *būtan*.]
 buȝ, 295 (V). See BEN.

C

calsidoine, *n.* chalcedony, precious stone of opalesque tints, 704. [OFr. *calcidoine*.]
 capoun, *n.* castrated cock, 672. [OE. *capun*.]
 care, *n.* sorrow, 43, 970; carfoul, *adj.* sorrowful, 580. [OE. *caru*.]
 catel(l), *n.* property, money, 150, 500, 835. [ONFr. *catel*.]
 certe(s), *adv.* assuredly, 943, 1015. [OFr. *certes*.]
 chapmen, *n. pl.* merchants, 146. [OE. *cēapmann*.]
 charbuncle, charbugle, *n.* carbuncle, 172 note, note to 657. [OFr. *charbuncle*, *charbucle*.]
 charged, ycharged, *pp.* loaded, 359, 856. [OFr. *charger*.]
 chaungi, *v.* change, 916. [OFr. *chan-
ger*.]
 cheping, *n.* market, 622. [OE. *cēping*.]
 chere, *n.* appearance, expression or beauty of face, 399, 531, 1103; *made glade chere*, made merry, 414. [OFr. *ch(ē)ere*.]
 chesen, *v.* choose, 683. [OE. *cēosan*.]
 clene, *adj.* pure, chaste, 59, 717; *adv.* completely, 877. [OE. *clēne*.]
 clepe, *v.* call, 137, 303, 723, 997. [OE. *cleopian*.]
 clippe, klippe, *v.* embrace, 961, 1024; clepte, *pa. t.* 932. [OE. *clippan*.]
 coluard, *adj.* villainous. [OFr. *coluert*.]

conne, *v.* know, be able, 941; **can**, *pres. sg.* 745; **coupe**, *pa. t.* 526; **coup**, *pp.* 1050. [OE. *cunnan.*]
contenance, *n.* show of feeling, delight (in each other), 936. [OFr. *contenance.*]
cop(pe), **coupe**, *n.* cup, 163, 444, 782, 783. [OE. *cuppe*, OFr. *coupe.*]
coppe, **coup(p)e**, *n.* basket, 852, 865, 868, 869. [OE. **cūpe* (cf. *cype*), infl. by prec.]
couerole, *n.* lid (of cup), 169. [OFr. *couerole.*]
coupe. See **COPPE**.
coup. See **CONNE**.
crestel, **cristal**, *n.* crystal, 654, 694. [OFr. *cristal.*]
Cristen, *adj.* Christian, 3, 247. [OE. *cristen.*]
Cristiente, *n.* Christendom, 642. [OFr. *cristienté.*]
cussen, *v.* kiss, *note to* 972; **cussing**, *n.* kissing, 933. [OE. *cyssan.*]
custe, *n.* virtue, *note to* 972. [OE. *cyst.*]

D

dalt, *pa. t.* dealt, 281. [OE. *dælan.*]
dawe, *n. dat. pl.* days; *don of dawwe*, put to death, 1067. [OE. *dagum*, *dat. pl.*]
dede. See **DON**.
deed, *adj.* dead, 91. [OE. *dēad.*]
deed, *n.* death, 46. [See note.]
demoere, *n.* delay, 1021. [OFr. *de-meure.*]
departed, *pa. t.* parted, 397. [OFr. *departir.*]
derie, *v.* harm, 394. [OE. *derian.*]
dernelich, *adv.* secretly, 974. [OE. *dernelice.*]
deuyse, *n.* direction, 357. [OFr. *devise.*]
deye, **dyȝe**, *v.* die, 260, 950. [ON. *deyja*, ODan. *dōja.*]
diȝt, **idiȝt**, *pp. and adj.* prepared, lodged, treated, 408, 672. [OE. *dih-tan.*]
dōme, *n.* punishment, 1164. [OE. *dōm.*]

don, *v.* do, put, 12; **dede**, **dude**, *pa. t.* 402, 858; (i)do, *pp.* 46, 536. [OE. *dōn.*]
doute, *v.* fear, 392, 953, 1040. [OFr. *douter.*]
dreme, *n.* noise, voice, 421. [OE. *drēam.*]
drenchen, *v.* drown, 393. [OE. *dren-can.*]
dreri, *adj.* sorrowful, 1135, 1221; **drewryer**, *compar.* 82. [OE. *drēorig.*]
Driȝt, *n.* lord, 1299. [OE. *dryhten.*]
druri, *n.* love-longing, 956. [OFr. *druerie.*]
dude. See **DON**.
dureȝ, *v. pres.* lasts, extends, 618. [OFr. *durer.*]
dwelle, *v.* remain, 1293. [OE. *dwellan.*]

E

eft(e), *adv.* again, 402, 434. [OE. *eft.*]
eȝe, *n.* eye, 1226. [OE. *ēage.*]
eye, *n.* fear, 709, 917. [OE. *ege.*]
eke, *adv.* also, 447. [OE. *ēac.*]
elde, *n.* age, 6. [OE. *ēldo.*]
encheson, *n.* circumstance, 78. [OFr. *encheson.*]
enderdai, *n.* a day recently passed, 429. [ON. *endr* formerly + OE. *dæg.*]
engynne, *n.* cunning, trickery, 329. [OFr. *engin.*]
erne, *v.* run, 719; **vrneȝ**, *pres. pl.* 647. [OE. *ernan*, *iernan.*]
epe, *adv.* easily, 825. [OE. *ēape.*]
euerich, *adj.* every, 599. [OE. *æfreylc.*]

F

fail(1)e, *v.* be lacking, 807; **prove** unfaithful to, 839. [OFr. *faillir.*]
fayn, *adj.* glad, 97; **fawe**, *adv.* gladly, 299, 1169. [OE. *fægen*, *fagen.*]
fair(h)ed, *n.* beauty, 280, 531. [OE. *fæger* + **hædu.*]
fale, **fele**, *adj.* many, 787, 867. [OE. *fela*, *feala.*]
fawe. See **FAYN**.
fe, *n.* money, 485. [OE. *feoh*, OFr. *fl.*]

fedde, *pa. t.* brought up, 3. [OE. *fēdan.*]

feire, *n.* market, 624. [OFr. *feire.*]

feire, *adj.* fair, 13; *adv.* fairly, 101. [OE. *fæger.*]

fel. See FIL.

felawe, *n.* comrade, 938. [OE. *fēolaga*, from ON. *fēlagi.*]

felonie, *n.* wrath, 755. [OFr. *felonie.*]

fer, *adj.* in good health, 581. [ON. *færr.*]

fer, *n.* companion, 512; *in fe(e)re*, *ifere*, together, 5 note, 81, 886. [OE. *gefēra.*]

fet, *pp.* fetched, 1278. [OE. *fetian.*]

fil, *pa. t.* fell, 1229; *pl.* 1182; fel to, befitted, 100. [OE. *feallan.*]

fin, *n.* end, 857. [OFr. *fin.*]

fin, *adj.* See note to 952.

fluste, *pa. t.* flew, 894 note. [OE. *fliogan.*]

fol, *n.* fool, 606. [OFr. *fol.*]

fon, *n. pl.* foes, 1116. [OE. *gefā.*]

fonde, *v.* seek, strive, 2, 831. [OE. *fandian.*]

foode, *n.* creature, 149. [OE. *fōda.*]

fordo, *pp.* destroyed, 716. [OE. *fōrdōn.*]

foreward, *n.* agreement, 841. [OE. *foreward.*]

forgete, *v.* forget, 333. [OE. *for-* + ON. *geta.*]

forzete, *forzēt*, *v.* forget, 50, 424. [OE. *for-getan.*]

forht, *adv.* forth, 403. [OE. *forþ.*]

forleie, *pp.* unchaste, 710. [OE. *for-legen.*]

forliued, *decepit*, *pp.* 297. [OE. *for-* + *lifian.*]

fort, *conj.* until, 1113. [OE. *forþ to.*]

foulen, *n. gen. pl.* of birds, 691. [OE. *fugol.*]

f(o)us, *adj.* eager, 765, 792. [OE. *fūs.*]

fre, *adj.* well bred, 498. [OE. *frēo.*]

fro, *prep.* from, 54. [ON. *frá.*]

frome, *n.* beginning; *ate f.*, readily, at once, 550, 566, 592. [OE. *fruma.*]

fulle, *v.* fill, 444, 1096. [OE. *fyllan.*]

fur, fir, *n.* fire, 1132, 1186. [OE. *fȳr.*]

G

gabbe, *n.* deceit; *wipoute g.*, surely, 911. [OFr. *gab.*]

gabbe, *v.* mock, 235. [OFr. *gabber.*]

gaderen, *v.* gather, 850. [OE. *gaderian.*]

gaf. See 31UEN.

galyngale, *n.* aromatic root used in cookery, 119. [OFr. *galingal*, from Arabic.]

game, *n.* pastime, amusement, 107 note. [OE. *gamen.*]

gan, *pa. t. auxil.* did, 472. [OE. (on) *ginnan.*]

garsome, garyson, *n.* treasure, money, 206, 821, 1171, 1259. [OE. *gærsum(a)*, from ON. *gærsimi*, treasure; OFr. *garison*, store.]

gateward, *n.* porter, 673. [OE. *geat-weard.*]

gegges, *n. pl.* servants, 855.

gelt, *n.* guilt, 1148; gilt, 1197; guld, 1139. [OE. *gylt.*]

gent, *adj.* high-born, 245. [OFr. *gent.*]

gestning, *n.* entertainment, 574. [O Dan. *gæstning.*]

geþ, gilt. See GON, GELT.

ginne, *n.* stratagem, 547; tool, 670. [Aphetic from OFr. *engin.*]

ginour, *n.* engineer, 748. [From prec.]

glade, *v.* cheer, 107; *reſt.* rejoice, 472. [OE. *gladian.*]

gle, *n.* merriment, 107, 897. [OE. *glēo.*]

god, *n.* profit, money, 483; goode, *pl.* 150. [OE. *gōd.*]

gome, *n.* man, 681. [OE. *guma.*]

go(o)n, *v.* go, 19, 890; walk, 840;

geþ, *pres. sg.* *607, 837; ago, *pp.* 1032; goo, *pp.* 31, 126. [OE. *gān.*]

graunt, *pa. t.* granted, 63. [OFr. *gr(e)anter.*]

grauē, *pp.* engraved, 165. [OE. *grāfan.*]

grede, *v.* cry out, 896. [OE. *grēdan.*]

grette, *pa. t.* greeted, 222. [OE. *grētan.*]

grom, *n.* boy, man, 1108; *pl.* 111. [OFr. *gromet*, servant, or MDu. *grom*, offspring, confused with GOME in ME.]

guld. See GELT.

3

- 3af.** See **3IEN.**
3ate, n. pl. gates, 620. [OE. *gāt.*]
3e(e), adv. yes, 94; **3o,** 1031. [OE. *gēa, gēa.*]
3eden, pa. t. pl. went, 925. [OE. *geēdon, pa. t. pl.*]
3ef, 3eef. See **3IF, 3IEN.**
3elde, v. repay, 588; (**i**)**3olde, pp.** paid, given, 161, 784. [OE. *gēldan.*]
3eme, n. heed, 422. [OE. *gēme.*]
3erne, adv. earnestly, 14, 777. [OE. *gēorne.*]
3he, pron. she, *passim.* [OE. *hēo.*]
3it, 3hete, adv. yet, 505, 593, 1014. [OE. *giēt, gēt.*]
3iuen, v. give, 803; **3if, 3iue, pres. subj.** 857, 1010; **gaf(e), 3af, 3eef, pa. t.** 180, 184, 195, 457. [OE. *giefan*; ON. *gefa, gifa.*]
3o, 3olde. See **3E(E), 3ELDE.**
3ore, adv. for a long time past, 586. [OE. *gēāra.*]

H

- hail, n.** health, 445. [ON. *heill.*]
halt. See **HELDEN.**
han, v. have, 1110; *pres. pl.* 405. [OE. *habban.*]
hardi, adj. bold, 1074. [OFr. *hardi.*]
he, hi(i), ho, pron. she, 730, 882, 909, 1014; **her(e), hire, hur, pron.** and *adj.* her, herself, *passim.* [OE. *hēo, hiere.*]
he, pron. he, *passim*; **it,** 637, 647; **him, dat.** it, 481. [OE. *hē.*]
he(e), hi, pron. they, 226, 401, 402; **her(e), hur, adj.** their; **hem, dat. and accus.** them. [OE. *hī(e), heora, heom.*]
he3(he), hye, adj. high, of high rank, 12, 469; **hei3e, 637; hegh3, full,** 563. [OE. *hē(a)h.*]
helden, v. hold, keep, 841; **halt, pres. sg.** considers, 606, 732. [OE. *hēaldan, hāldan.*]
helue, n. dat. side, way, 557. [OE. *he(a)lf.*]

- hende, adj.** courteous, 156, 460; **hynde, 371.** [OE. *gehēnde.*]
hepe, n. crowd, 880. [OE. *hēap.*]
her(e). See **HE.**
hert(e), n. heart, 116, 525. [OE. *heorte.*]
hert-roote, n. the depths of the heart, 117. [Prec. + ON. *rōt.*]
heste, n. behest, 470. [From OE. *hēs.*]
het(e), pa. t. commanded, 517; was named, 1193; **ihote, pp.** named, 569. [OE. *hātan.*]
heued, n. head, 141. [OE. *hēafod.*]
hi(i). See **HE.**
hy(3)e, n. haste, 250, 259. [From OE. *higian, v.*]
hynde. See **HENDE.**
ho. See **HE.**
hol, adj.; hol and sond, whole and sound, 786. [OE. *hāl.*]
hond-habbing, adj. having the stolen article in hand; (taken) red-handed, 1128. [OE. *hondhabbend.*]
hur. See **HE.**

I

- I-, prefix (= OE. *ge-*).** See under the following element.
iacinctes, n. pl. jacinths, 705 note. [OFr. *iacinte.*]
ibult, pp. built, 1095. [OE. *gebyld, pp.*]
ich, pron. I, 450; **ihe, 906; y, I, 19,** 383. [OE. *ic.*]
ichulle = ich wille, 302 (V).
i3olde, ihote. See **3ELDE, HETE.**
ilohe, ilke, ylk, adj. same, 78, 183, 676. [OE. *ilca.*]
ilich, adj. like, 437; **iliche, adv.** continuously, ever, 624. [OE. *gelic, gelice.*]
iloke, pp. looked, 1007. [OE. *lōcian.*]
ilome, adv. often, 294. [OE. *gelōme.*]
in(ne), n. lodging, inn, 479, 495, 583. [OE. *inn.*]
inow(3), adj. enough, plenty, 33, 486; *adv.* in plenty, 113. [OE. *genōh.*]
ioy, n. joy, 106. [OFr. *voie.*]

ipaned, *pp.* lined (with fur), 519.

[From OFr. *pane*, *n.*]

irad, *pp.* See REDE.

irawt, *pp.* given, 571. [OE. *rēcan*.]

is = *his*, 298.

iseo, *v.* see, 789 (*C*); iseȝen, *pa. t. pl.*

1219. [OE. *gesēon*.]

iprast, *pp.* thrust, 1159. [OE. *præstan*.]

iustening, *n.* power, 609 note.

iwite, *v.* know, find out, 1054; guard,

protect, 977. [OE. *gewitan*.]

iwrowt. See WYRCHÉ.

K

k-. See also under C.

kaiser, *n.* emperor, 436. [ON. *keisari*.]

kanel, *n.* water conduit, 653. [ONFr. *canel*.]

kesse, *v.* kiss, 542, 932; *kiste hem*,

kissed each other, 398. [OE. *cyssan*.]

kyngryche, *n.* kingdom, 364. [OE.

cynerice, infl. by ME. *kyng*.]

knaue, *n.* unskilled workman, 166;

servant, 366. [OE. *cnafa*.]

L

lað, *pp.* led, taken, 526. [OE. *lædan*.]

lai. See LIGGE.

largeliche, *adv.* generously, 457. [From OFr. *large*.]

lasse, *adv.* less, 425. [OE. *læssa*, *adj.*; *læs*, *adv.*]

lat, 1200. See LETE.

led, *n.* water conduit, 655. [From OE. *lædan*.]

lef, *adj.* pleasing, 598; beloved, 301, 328; leue, *wk.* 355, 512; leuer,

compar. preferable, 323. [OE. *lēof*.]

legge, *v.* lay, 798. [OE. *leggan*.]

leyende, leizende, leizande, *pres.*

part. laughing, 901, 923, 937; lowen,

pa. t. pl. 1262. [OE. *hlekkhan*.]

lem(m)an, *n.* loved one, 441. [OE. **lēof man*.]

lende, *v.* land, 459. [OE. *lendan*.]

long, lenger, *adv. compar.* longer, 562; 800. [OE. *leng*.]

lepe, *v.* run, 879; *pa. t.* 931. [OE. *hlæpan*.]

lese, *v.* lose, 57. [OE. (*be-*, *for-*) *lēosan*.]

lesyng, *n.* falsehood, deception, 84, 233. [OE. *lēasung*.]

lete, *v.* let, allow; lest, *pres. 2 sg.*

789; *lat. imperf.* 1200; bid, com-

mand, 140; let, *pa. t.* 155. [OE.

lætan.]

leue, leue(r). See LIBBEN, LEF.

leuedi, *n.* lady, mistress, 419. [OE. *hlæfdige*.]

libbe(n), leue, *v.* live, 295, 341, 692;

lyf, *pres. subj.* 56. [OE. *libban*, *leofian*.]

lyche, *adj.* like, 164. [OE. *gelic*.]

lycorys, *n.* liquorice, 119. [AN. *lycorys*.]

lifdawe, *n. dat. pl.* life-days; *bringen of l.*, put to death, 48. [OE. *lifdagum*, *dat. pl.*]

ligge, *v.* lie, 400; lyth, *pres. 3 sg.*

217; lay, *pa. t.* was lodged, 407.

[OE. *licgan*.]

liȝt, *v.* become joyful, 443; *pp.* alighted,

221. [OE. *lihtan*.]

like, *v.* please, 583, 903. [OE. *līcian*.]

lim, *n.* lime, 641. [OE. *līm*.]

list, *pres. 2 sg.* wishest, 800. [OE. *lystan*.]

lite, *adv.* little, 904. [OE. *lyt*.]

lyth. See LIGGE.

lordingges, *n. pl.* lords, 1099 (with no sense of contempt). [OE. *hlāfording*.]

lore, *n.* learning, 10. [OE. *lār*.]

lope, *adj.* hateful, 1109. [OE. *lād*.]

louerd, *n.* lord, master, 409. [OE.

hlāford.]

lowen. See LEYENDE.

M

made(n), maide(n), *n.* maiden, 58,

140 note, 433 note, 1254. [OE.

mægden, *mæden*.]

mai, may, *n.* maiden, 201, 430. [ON.

mey, *accus. of mærl*.]

main, *n.* strength; *wiþ alle main*, with all speed, 403, 1042. [OE. *mægen*.]
 make, *n.* wife, 319; *imake*, equal, 276. [OE. *gemaca*.]
 make, *v.* make; cause to be (*with in-fn.*), 73. [OE. *macian*.]
 malisoun, *n.* curse, 866. [OFr. *maleison*.]
 manken, *n.* human nature, 1141. [OE. *mancynn*.]
 manred, *n.* homage, 815. [OE. *mann-ræden*.]
 marchaurdes, *n. pl.* merchants, 147. [OFr. *marchand*.]
 mast, *pa. t.* must, 357. [Obscure ME. variant from OE. *mōste*, *pa. t.*]
 me, men, *pron. indef.* one, 291 note, 728. [OE. *man*, *pron.*]
 mede, *n.* meadow, 850. [OE. *mæd*.]
 meene, *v.* lament, 273. [OE. *mænan*.]
 mene, *n.* retinue, 1268. [OFr. *meine*, OE. *menigū*.]
 meniuer, *n.* variegated fur lining, 519 note. [OFr. *menu vair*.]
 menske, *n.* honour, 56. [ON. *mennska*.]
 mest(e), *adj.* greatest, 505, 593; *adv.* most, 989. [OE. *mæst*.]
 mete, *n.* food, 129. [OE. *mete*.]
 mid, *prep.* with, 302. [OE. *mid*.]
 middelhard, *n.* earth, 690. [OE. *mid-dan(g)earð*, reformed with *middel*, *adj.*]
 myȝt, *n.* power; *al hur m.*, all in her power, 71. [OE. *miht*.]
 myȝt(e), *pa. t.* could, 30, *155, 525; mouȝt, 544. [OE. *mihte*, *muhte*, *pa. t.*]
 mireȝpe, *n.* joy, 1146. [OE. *myrgþ*.]
 mister, *n.* trade, 754. [OFr. *mest(er)*.]
 mo, *adv.* more, 626. [OE. *mā*.]
 mochel, *adv.* greatly, 504. [OE. *mycle*.]
 mod, mood, *n.* mood, anger, 135, 1112. [OE. *mōd*.]
 moder, *n.* mother, 76. [OE. *mōdor*.]
 molde, *n.* earth, 359. [OE. *mōlde*.]
 mone, moonay, *n.* money, 361, 788. [OFr. *moneie*.]

morwen, morewentide, *n.* morning, 996, 1019. [OE. *morgen(tid)*.]
 mornes, *pres. sg.* mourns, 114. [OE. *murnan*.]
 mot, *pres. may*, 87, 814; mote, *subj.* 1309. [OE. *mōt*.]
 mouȝt. See MYȝT(E).

N

nam. See NIME.
 nart = *ne art*, art not, 581.
 nas = *ne was*, was not, 875.
 napeles, *adv.* nevertheless, 839. [OE. *nā þe lēs*.]
 neb, *n.* nose, face, 1048, 1182. [OE. *nebb*.]
 nedeþ, *v. impers.*; þe *n.*, thou needest, 353. [OE. *nēodian*.]
 ne(g)ȝ, neiȝe, *adv.* near, 564, 638, 885. [OE. *nē(a)h*.]
 nelle, nylle = *ne wille*, will not, 301, 720.
 nempnen, *v.* name, 515. [OE. *nemnan*.]
 ner(en) = *ne were(n)*, 886, 1145.
 nere, *adv.* never; *nere non*, none at all, 275. [OE. *næfre*.]
 nes, nis = *ne is*, is not, 275, 623.
 neuene, *v.* name, 441. [ON. *nefna*.]
 nime, *v.* take, 422, 517; go (on one's way), 403; nam, noom, *pa. t.* 310, 542; noom, inome, *pp.* 128, 227, 479. [OE. *niman*.]
 noȝt. See NOWȝT.
 noþer, *adv.* neither, 614. [OE. *nōþer*.]
 nouth, nouþe, *adv.* now, 267, 397. [OE. *nū þā*.]
 nowiȝt, no(u)ȝt, *adv.* in no wise, not, 19, 152, 292; nowt(h), 383, 875. [OE. *nū-, nōwiht, nōht*.]

O

o(o), o(o)n, *num.* one, 123, 193 note, 854; *art.* a, 647, 653. [OE. *ān*.]
 oȝene, *adj.* own, 944; owen, 590. [OE. *āgen*.]
 onicle, *n.* onyx, 706. [OFr. *onicle*.]
 ore, *n.* grace, mercy, 585. [OE. *ār*.]

oreisoun, *n.* prayer, 1009. [OFr. *oreison*.]
 orfreis, *n.* rich embroidery, 387. [OFr. *orfreis*, from Lat. *auriphrygium*, Phrygian cloth with gold embroidery.]
 oper, *conj.* or (else), 583, 1130. [OE. *ōuper*.]
 ouȝt, *n.* anything, 771; *adv.* at all, 938. [OE. *ō(wi)ht*.]
 out, *prep.* out of, 523. [Elliptical, from OE. *ūt of*.]

P

palle, *n.* rich cloth, 680. [OE. *þæll*.]
 pans, *n. pl.* pence, money, 768. [OE. *þæneg*, *þenig*.]
 parage, *n.* noble lineage, 668. [OFr. *parage*.]
 parchemyn, *n.* parchment, vellum, 34. [OFr. *parchemin*.]
 parte, *v.* share, give, 809. [OFr. *partir*.]
 pine, *n.* sorrow, 971. [OE. **þin*.]
 pytte, *pp.* put, set, 25. [OE. *pytan*.]
 plener, *adj.* full, 624. [OFr. *plen(er)*.]
 pomel, *n.* ornamental knob (as handle, or finial of tower), 171, 655. [OFr. *pomel*.]
 prys, *n.* value, 358. [OFr. *pris*.]

Q

quelle, *v.* kill, 1064, 1110. [OE. *cwellan*.]
 quykke, *adj.* alive, 91. [OE. *cwic*.]
 quite, *adj.* free, 1198; deprived of, 616. [OFr. *quite*.]
 quok, *pa. t.* quaked, 1063. [OE. *cwacian*.]

R

rath(e), *adv.* quickly, 50, 193. [OE. *hræpe*.]
 rede(n), reede, *v.* advise, 64, 369, 554; read, 21, 215; redde, *pa. t.* saved by advice, 1234; radde, *pa. subj.* might advise, 546; irad, *pp.* read, 1008. [OE. *rædan*.]
 reed, red, *n.* advice, plan, 45, 51, 742, 745; cunning, 656. [OE. *ræd*, *rēd*.]

reed, *adj.* red, 162, 382. [OE. *rēad*.]
 rekke, recche, *v.* care, 96, 298. [OE. *reccan*.]
 rene, *n.* fountain, 718. [OE. *ryne*.]
 rest him, *pa. t. refl.* rested, 453. [OE. *restan*.]
 reue, *v.* rob, 678. [OE. *rēafian*.]
 reupe, *n.* (cause for) pity, 921, 1188, 1222. [From OE. *hrēow*, sorrow.]
 ryche, *adj.* rich, 146; mighty, powerful, 100, 610. [OFr. *riche*, OE. *rice*.]
 riȝt, *adv.* straightway, 444. [OE. *rihte*.]
 ronne, *pa. t. pl.* ran, 250. [OE. *iernan*, ON. *rinna*.]
 roun, *adv.* around, 960. [ME. *aroun*, from OFr. *en rond*.]
 round, *pa. t.* gave (private) counsel, 1232. [OE. *rūnian*.]
 route, *n.* company, band, 991. [OFr. *route*.]
 rouwȝ, *adj.* rough, 339. [OE. *rūh*.]

S

sarazins, *n. pl.* Saracens, 1133 (A). [OFr. *sarazin*.]
 sardoine, *n.* a variety of onyx, having a layer of sard (cornelian) in it, 703. [OFr. *sardoine*, from Latin *sardonix*.]
 scantiloun, *n.* a builder's measuring-rod, 749. [OFr. *escantillon*.]
 scheke, *n.* chess, 764 note.
 schere, 531. See CHERE.
 schonde, *n.* infamy, 1118. [OE. *scōnd*.]
 sco(o)le, *n.* school, 19, 31. [OFr. *escole*.]
 seche, *v.* seek, 452. [OE. *sēcan*.]
 seek, *adj.* sick, 76. [OE. *sēoc*.]
 segge. See SIGGE.
 seȝ(e), seȝhȝ, seiȝ. See SEN.
 seith. See note to 116.
 sekerly. See SIKER.
 selden, *adv.* seldom, 886. [OE. *seldan*.]
 sen, *v.* see, 476; seȝ(e), seiȝ, *pa. t.* 400, 875, 1052, 1061. [OE. *sēon*.]
 sen. See SEP(E).
 sendal, *n.* a silken fabric, 958. [OFr. *cendal*.]

seriaunt, *n.* servant, 667, 1133. [OFr. *seriant*.]
 sep(e), seth(e), sipen, sen, *conj.* and *adv.* afterwards, since, 183, 322, 352, 1067, 1087. [OE. *sippan*.]
 seue, *num.* seven, 625. [OE. *seofon*.]
 seuenyȝt, *n.* week, note to 242. [OE. *seofon nihta*.]
 shull, *pres. pl.* shall, 65. [OE. *sculon*.]
 sigge, segge, *v.* say, 779, 1121, 1172. [OE. *seġan, sigan*.]
 siker, *adj.* sure, 950; sekerly, *adv.* 92. [OE. *sicor*.]
 syke, *v.* sigh, 113; syȝt, *pa. t.* 256, 740. [OE. *sican*.]
 sipen, sippe. See SEP(E).
 syþe(s), *n. pl.* times, 196, 620. [OE. *sip*.]
 skete, *adv.* quickly, 1194. [ON. **skéott* (Icel. *skjótt*).]
 slee, slen, *v.* slay, 62, 1236; yslawe, *pp.* 47, 1070. [OE. *slēan*.]
 slitte, *n.* (opening of) pocket, 770. [OE. *geslit*.]
 so, *adv.* as, 381. [OE. *swā*.]
 soler, *n.* cellar, 173 note.
 somdel, *adv.* somewhat, 626. [OE. *sume dæle*.]
 sonde, *n.* (God's) dispensation, 462; service of food, 1281. [OE. *sónd*.]
 soote, *adj.* sweet, 118. [OE. *swōt*.]
 sowne, *n.*; on s., in a swoon, 252. [OE. *geswōgen*, *pp.* See note to 5.]
 sownyd, *pa. t.* swooned, 246. [From *prec.*]
 spede, *v.* succeed, 802, 1233. [OE. *spēdan*.]
 spille, *v.* kill, 1196. [OE. *spillan*.]
 squir, *n.* tee-square used by joiners, &c., 749. [OFr. *esquire*.]
 sschewe, *v.* tell forth, 1091. [OE. *scēawian*.]
 sschrichen, *v.* scream, 896. [OE. **scrican*.]
 stage, *n.* upper floor, 667, 687. [OFr. *estage*.]
 stant, *pres. sg.* stands, 636. [OE. *standan*.]

steiȝ, *pa. t.* climbed, 1051. [OE. *stīgan*.]
 steke, *pp.* fixed, 116. [OE. **stecan*.]
 steuene, *n.* voice, speech, 442. [OE. *stefn*.]
 stike, *v.* stab, 296. [OE. *stician*.]
 stirte, *pa. t.* sprang, 876. [OE. *styr-tan*.]
 stoole, *pp.* stolen, 181. [OE. *stelan*.]
 store, *adv.* strongly, 650. [ON. *stórr*, *adj.*]
 stound, *n.* time, 343. [OE. *stúnd*.]
 striue, *pa. t.* strove, 1190. [OFr. *estriver*.]
 suþe. See SWYÞE.
 swage, *v.* grow less, 38. [AN. *swag(er)*.]
 swayn, *n.* man, 368. [ON. *sveinn*.]
 sword, *n.* sword, 1053. [OE. *sweord*.]
 swire, *n.* neck, 1211. [OE. *swīra*.]
 swyþ(e), su(i)þe, *adv.* very, greatly, 80, 560; soundly, 1012. [OE. *swyþe*.]

T

taise, *n.* fathom, 637, 639. [OFr. *teise*.]
 take, *v.* take; give, hand over, 207. [ON. *taka*.]
 targep, *pres. pl.* delay, note to 226. [OFr. *targ(er)*.]
 te, *pron. dat.* = þe, 769, 805.
 te, *v.* go, 744. [OE. *tēon*.]
 teene, *n.* vexation, 138. [OE. *tēona*.]
 tende, *v.* kindle, 1132. [OE. *tēndan*.]
 tire, *v. trans.* draw, 1212. [OFr. *tirer*.]
 tobrake, *pa. t.* broke, 133. [OE. *to-brecan*.]
 toȝain, *adv.* against, 894. [OE. *togegn*.]
 towaille, *n.* towel, 983. [OFr. *tonaille*.]
 trest, *n.* trust, 824. See TRISTE.
 treunesse, *n.* loyalty, fidelity, 922. [OE. *trēownes*.]
 treupe, *n.* troth, plighted faith, 922. [OE. *trēowþ*.]
 trēwþe-iþliȝt, *adj.* sworn in brotherhood, 553. [Prec. + OE. *plihtan*.]
 triste, *pa. t.* trusted, 888. [? OE. **trýstan*.]

twai, t(w)o, *num.* two, *981, 1048, [OE. *twēgen*, *m.*, *twā*, *f.n.*]₁

p

pan, *pron. da. tsg.* that, 895; *for pan*, for that cause, 516; *pl.* 809. [OE. *pām*, *dat.*]

pai, pei, pe3, pau3, *conj.* though, 346, 631, 750. [OE. *pēah*, *pæh*.]

pai, pey, *pron.* they, *pass.* [ON. *peir*.]

pat, *demonstr. pron. and adj.* that, *passim*; *art.* the, 382, 611, 627. [OE. *pæt*.]

penke, pinke, *v.* 122, 341; pou3t(e), pout, *pa. t.* 37, 449, 473. [OE. *pencan*.]

per(e), *conj.* where, 258, 407. [OE. *pær*.]

perizt, *adv.*; *amide p.* in the middle, 635. [OE. *pær riht*.]

perto, *adv.* in addition, 625. [OE. *pærtō*.]

pilke, *adj.* this, 613; those, 295. = *pē ilke*.

ping, pink, *n.* affair, 502 (*pl.*); creature, 82; *pure3 alle ping*, especially, 1127. [OE. *ping*.]

pyneþ, *pres.* seems, 123, 426; pou3te, *pa. t.* 464. [OE. *pyncan*.]

po, *adv.* then, 3, 82. [OE. *pā*.]

pole, polie, *v.* suffer, 838, 1217. [OE. *polian*.]

pon, *adv.* then, 20; *vnder þon*, meanwhile, 1068. [OE. *þonne*.]

porfen, *pres. pl.* need, 657; thurft, pourt, *pa. t.* 1, 665. [OE. *þurfan*.]

pou(3)t, *n.* thought, 500. [OE. *þoht*.]

pou3te. See ÞENKE.

pourg(h), prou3, pure3, *prep.* through, 329, 573, 734, 1127. [OE. *þurh*.]

pous, *adv.* thus, 429, 508. [OE. *þus*.]

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